

1968

The Development of the Louisiana Teachers' Association.

Willoughby Aaron Sullivan Jr

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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Louisiana State University and Agricultural and
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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOUISIANA
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Education

by

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B.A., Mississippi College, 1939
M.Ed., Louisiana State University, 1963
August, 1968

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ABSTRACT

First efforts at organization of teachers' associations at the State level occurred in Louisiana before the War between the States. One such effort was made at Thibodaux in 1855 at the instigation of Samuel Bard, an early State Superintendent of Public Education. During the period of Reconstruction following the war, a State convention of teachers was held in New Orleans at the call of State Superintendent of Public Education Thomas W. Conway. The first long-lasting education associations with pretensions to wide influence appeared in Louisiana in the 1880's. These were the Louisiana Education Society, which had its headquarters in New Orleans, and the Louisiana Educational Association, which, while influential mainly in the northern part of the State, gained State-wide recognition.

The organization known today as the Louisiana Teachers' Association was organized at Alexandria during the Christmas holidays in 1892. For the first thirty years of its existence, the Association exerted its influence principally by holding conventions, which did much to

publicize educational problems and to add strength to projects undertaken by State school officials. During this period, the Association did not have a permanent headquarters or a full-time administrative officer. The Association was reorganized in 1922, acquiring its first full-time executive secretary--P. H. Griffith.

The administration of P. H. Griffith was notable for great growth in Association membership, for acquirement of an Association-owned headquarters building, and for the first vigorous Association leadership in promoting school legislation. The membership grew from approximately 1,200 in 1922 to more than 9,000 when Griffith resigned in 1931. The Association authorized purchase of a building on Florida Street in Baton Rouge in 1928, and converted it into an organization headquarters. The Association was largely responsible for passage of a bill imposing a tax on tobacco products in 1926 to increase school revenues at the State level.

G. O. Houston was elected to succeed Griffith as executive secretary of the Association. The most outstanding accomplishments of Houston's administration were in the field of teacher welfare. At a single session of the

Legislature, in 1936, the Association prepared and successfully promoted passage of legislation providing laws which established in Louisiana one of the nation's most liberal teacher-retirement systems, and provided job tenure for Louisiana teachers.

Spencer Phillips was named the Association's third executive secretary when Houston died early in 1937. His relatively short tenure of office was marked by vigorous defense of teacher-welfare gains realized in the previous administration. Actuarial integrity of the teacher-retirement system was successfully defended against proposals for changes which would have been economically unsound, and attacks against the new tenure law were repulsed.

When Phillips resigned in 1939, Howard W. Wright was elected by the Association's Executive Council to succeed him. Wright's administration was highlighted by a continuing campaign for passage of laws to benefit public-school education in Louisiana. The campaign, supported by the Association in cooperation with other agencies, reached its climax in 1948, when the Legislature passed eighty-eight Acts affecting the public schools. One of these Acts

established a State-wide minimum salary scale for public-school teachers. Wright's administration also saw great expansion of the Association's services to its membership. A field secretary was added to the administrative staff to help implement the Association's service program at the parish level.

CHAPTER I

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS IN EUROPE, AMERICA, AND LOUISIANA

Literature referring to professional associations of teachers relates to many aspects of this educational development. Historians of education have suggested origination of the organized teachers' agency in Europe, more than a century before the voyages of Columbus, and have traced its history in America as a development associated with evolvement of public-school education. Other writers have concerned themselves with the aims and purposes underlying the banding together of teachers and other educators in professional groups. Critics--both friendly and hostile--have produced written analyses of results obtained through the activities of teachers' associations. The histories of various state organizations have been the topics of research studies, providing a means of comparison of such groups with one another. State associations are credited with organizing today's National Education Association, the largest teachers' organization in the United States.

7

I. ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS IN THE UNITED STATES

According to Crawford, the Hieronymians, or Brethren of the Common Life, probably formed one of the first voluntary associations for the promotion of education.¹ Wilds and Lottich described the Hieronymians as "a semimonastic order, founded in Holland in 1376," and credited them with being an important agency in the "spread of the Renaissance movement in northern Europe."² More than four centuries passed before teachers' associations had their beginnings in America, as a sense of professionalism and a consciousness of a commonality of interests began to develop among public-school teachers.

Local Associations

Elsbree and Beck identified the Society of Associated Teachers, established in New York City in 1794, as the

¹Albert Byron Crawford, A Critical Analysis of the Present Status and Significant Trends of State Education Associations of the United States (published as Bulletin of the Bureau of School Services No. 4; Lexington, Kentucky: Bureau of School Services, College of Education, University of Kentucky, 1932), p. 8.

²Elmer H. Wilds and Kenneth V. Lottich, The Foundations of Modern Education (third edition; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Incorporated, 1964), p. 168.

"oldest known teachers' organization in the United States."³ This body, formed as a secret society, met regularly until 1807. "It seems," said Elsbree and Beck, "to have been supplanted by the Society of Teachers of the City of New York which was incorporated in 1811."⁴ Hubbard wrote that similar groups were organized "in Middlesex, Connecticut, in 1799; in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1812; and in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1813," and that by "1850, teachers' associations were fairly common in counties and in the largest cities."⁵ Elsbree and Beck asserted that local teachers' organizations remained "few in number and relatively unimportant until the beginning of the present century."⁶ By 1960, there were an estimated

³Willard S. Elsbree and Hubert P. Beck, "Teachers' Associations: United States," Educational Yearbook of the International Institute of Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935, I. L. Kandel, editor (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935), p. 506.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Frank W. Hubbard, "Teachers' Organizations," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Chester W. Harris, editor (third edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 1491.

⁶Elsbree and Beck, op. cit., p. 507.

ten thousand local teacher groups of all types in the United States.

Origins of State Associations

Cubberley found the seed of larger teachers' organizations in such agencies as the American Lyceum, the Western Literary Institute, and the College of Professional Teachers. Of these groups, he wrote: "During the decades between 1820 and 1850 these propaganda agencies rendered notable service in the formation of public sentiment favorable to tax-supported schools."⁷ Noting that records indicated the existence of town and county conventions of teachers by 1830, "and shortly thereafter of state conventions where the addresses were intended primarily for teachers and principals," Cubberley placed the appearance of state teachers' associations fifteen years later, stating that "the first formally organized state teachers' association was not being formed until about 1845."⁸ Among the earliest state associations were the Rhode Island

⁷Ellwood P. Cubberley, Public Education in the United States (revised and enlarged edition; Cambridge, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), p. 704.

⁸Ibid.

Institute of Instruction and the Massachusetts Teachers' Association, both of which came into existence in 1844. Like the Louisiana Association, organized nearly fifty years later, the Massachusetts Teachers' Association accorded membership only to teachers.⁹ Cubberley declared also that a state association of teachers was established in 1844 in New York. Crawford wrote that the organization of teachers' associations remained mostly on a small-scale, local basis until an interest in the creation of strong state school systems began to emerge around the middle of the nineteenth century. He noted that growth of state associations was slow but continuous for several decades.¹⁰

Growth of State Associations

If the movement for organization of state teachers' associations was dependent on the development of effective state systems of public schools, the slow spread over the nation of public demand for strong state school support may explain the slow increase in the number of state associations. As late as 1931, according to Crawford, teachers

⁹Ibid., p. 708.

¹⁰Crawford, op. cit., p. 11.

in five of the forty-eight states still had not formed state organizations.¹¹ The National Education Association, however, in 1953 listed associations for every state and territory of the United States except Alaska, and indicated that the last to be organized was the Hawaii association in 1921.¹²

Stimuli for increasing membership. Ganrud, writing about the growth of state teachers' associations, referred to a sudden spurt in growth which occurred after World War I. He estimated that by 1926 approximately 70 per cent of public-school teachers in the United States belonged to state associations, comparing this to 14.7 per cent of teachers affiliated with such organizations in 1906. He asserted:

A great deal of this growth was due to criticisms of educational expenditures which followed the World War, and the resultant need for effectual organization. It was also due to increased appreciation of group action which has characterized specialized groups

¹¹Ibid., pp. 11-12.

¹²NEA Handbook for Local, State, and National Associations, 1953-54 (Washington: National Education Association of the United States, 1953), p. 84.

during the past decade.¹³

Harking back to the beginning of the movement for organization of state associations of teachers, Ganrud asserted:

The need for an effective use of group power, working in the interest of its own members and at the same time retaining the point of view of public betterment, was early understood and was the reason for the organization of the first state teachers' associations. They were the outcome of necessity.¹⁴

Eligibility for membership. By 1957, state education associations in the United States enrolled almost all of their potential membership.¹⁵ The question of eligibility for membership has been an important one to state teachers' associations. A substantial majority of the state associations has limited membership to persons actually working in the field of education.¹⁶ In the histories of some associations there was evidence of early resentment felt by

¹³John Ganrud, The Organization and Objectives of State Teachers' Associations, Teachers College, Columbia University Contribution to Education No. 234 (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1926), p. 1.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁵Hubbard, op. cit., p. 1492.

¹⁶Ibid.

public-school educators against the classroom and administrative personnel of private schools. During the nineteenth century, for example, controversy among members of the Tennessee Education Association resulted "in the withdrawal of the private school people from the association, and the assumption of its control by public school leaders."¹⁷

Purposes of State Associations

Statements of the purpose of state teachers' associations differed in keeping with their authors' points of view. Continuing improvement of the public-school system may be taken as the primary associational aim endorsed by nearly all who have written on the subject. Differences occurred among authorities over what particular aims and activities should be adopted by state associations as their proper contributions to the improvement of education.

Ganrud, having cited the fostering of a sense of professional unity among teachers, and the furtherance of the educational program, as the accepted primary goals of state teachers' associations, listed secondary aims by

¹⁷William Dunn Smith, "History of the Tennessee Education Association" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1952), p. 109.

means of which he felt the two basic goals might be best attained. His secondary aims included: (1) publicity for the advancement of the educational program; (2) promotion of legislation favorable to the schools; (3) addition to the professional knowledge of teachers; and (4) contribution to professional information through research.¹⁸

Stinnett offered a statement of purposes which, though worded and organized differently, largely corresponds to the list submitted by Ganrud. Stinnett wrote:

The purpose of a . . . professional organization in the field of education is the maintenance and improvement of the educational service. In order to achieve this purpose, it is essential that there should be continuous study and research with respect to the process of education, the conditions under which the process is carried on, the results achieved, and the means of its improvement; promotion of all movements which will give stability and professional character to educational undertakings; provision which will insure the continued professional growth of those engaged in the service of education; and the maintenance of such relations with the public as will secure economic welfare, social security, and civil liberties for those who serve the public in carrying on education.¹⁹

In discussing the evolvement and contemporary activities of state teachers' associations, DeYoung and Wynn said:

¹⁸Ganrud, op. cit., pp. 24-26.

¹⁹T. M. Stinnett, The Teacher and Professional Organizations (third edition; Washington: National Education Association of the United States, 1956), p. 64.

There is a major emphasis on professional improvement of the members, the advancement of pupil and teacher welfare, services to the schools and communities in the state, particularly through legislation, and active cooperation with the associations of other states and the national association.²⁰

Less comprehensive discussions of aims and purposes of teachers' associations have been advanced. Declaring that "motivation for improvement is more often effective when it comes from one's peers than when it originates from one's superiors," Corey predicted that the "most important change in teacher-association programs in the next three decades must be increased involvement in the improvement of instruction."²¹ Declaring that in "the occupational hierarchy of this country, quite often the position of elementary and secondary instructor carries with it low feelings of prestige and esteem," Cangemi suggested that creation of a professional esprit de corps must be regarded as one of the most important purposes of teachers' associations.²²

²⁰Chris A. DeYoung and Richard Wynn, American Education (fifth edition; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 306.

²¹Arthur F. Corey, "New Emphasis for Teacher Organizations in an Age of Transience," California Teachers' Association Journal, LXII (May, 1966), 4.

²²Joseph P. Cangemi, "Raising Status and Esteem of Public School Teachers," The Clearing House, XXXVIII (May, 1964), 540.

Effectiveness of State Associations

That state teachers' associations can be very effective in working for realization of their aims was evidenced particularly in the field of legislation. Carr alluded to teacher efforts in school legislation when, in an address to the Delegate Assembly of the National Education Association in Seattle, he said:

Any experienced member of this assembly knows that the important educational gains through state legislation have resulted directly from the dynamic activities of the state education associations, strongly backed by local associations, and by the NEA.²³

An early example of the effectiveness of the legislative activity of state teachers' associations in the field of teacher welfare was described by Montgomery in writing about passage of a retirement law for public-school teachers of New Jersey in 1909. He wrote: "After two public hearings and a great deal of persuasion by State Teachers' Association members, the bill finally became law April 21, 1909."²⁴

²³William G. Carr, "The Assault on Professional Independence," Phi Delta Kappan, XLVI (September, 1964), 18.

²⁴James C. Montgomery, "A History of the New Jersey Education Association" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1950), p. 67.

In assaying the effectiveness of state teachers' associations, Stinnett placed legislative accomplishments at the top of the list. Agreeing that there may be exceptions to his "generalization," he declared:

State education associations have been chiefly responsible for almost every gain in public education which has resulted from legal enactments. . . . State associations have led in efforts to secure adequate financial support, to bring about larger administrative school units, to institute equalization of educational opportunity, and to obtain teacher welfare provisions. They have served as effective instruments of professional growth of their members. State associations speak for the organized profession before the state legislature, state departments of education, and meetings of lay organizations; they defend their members against unjust dismissals or unfair treatment; and they present viewpoints of the profession to the people.²⁵

But, like most other noteworthy institutions, and in spite of their many demonstrable contributions to public-school education in the face of difficult circumstances, state teachers' associations attracted hostile critics. Representative of these, and one of the most voluble, is Lieberman. An example of his style of inimical criticism is to be found in an article published in an educational periodical:

. . . The enormous disparity between the amounts

²⁵ Stinnett, op. cit., p. 93.

spent for educational research and the amounts spent for medical, agricultural, industrial and technological research is a reflection of the weakness of teachers' organizations.²⁶

Parentage of National Education Association

Cooperation among state teachers' associations was cited by Wesley as the force which brought about organization of the National Education Association at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1857. He wrote:

The call to hold a meeting in Philadelphia in August 1857 was issued over the signatures of the presidents of ten state teachers' associations: New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Missouri.²⁷

Wesley observed that eminent educational leaders of the day were not instrumental in the movement to form a national teachers' organization. He credited "practical teachers" with the accomplishment. He wrote:

Thus a great national organization of the teaching profession was sponsored and inaugurated by the humble state associations rather than by the semiclassical American Institute of Instruction, the eminently

²⁶Myron Lieberman, "Some Reflections on Teachers Organizations," The Educational Forum, XXIV (November, 1959), 74.

²⁷Edgar B. Wesley, The First Hundred Years (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 21.

sponsored American Association for the Advancement of Education, or the lofty Western Literary Institute and College of Teachers.²⁸

II. EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS IN LOUISIANA BEFORE 1892

Long before a group of public-school teachers met in Alexandria in 1892 to establish an organization which was to become the Louisiana Teachers' Association, awareness of the potential efficacy of professional solidarity exerted an influence in the State. Cooperative work in the interest of public education was attempted at both the State and local levels. Many of the goals now pursued by professional teachers' agencies were adopted by pioneer educational groups in Louisiana before the War between the States, and during the Reconstruction period which followed the war. While some were not teachers' associations in the modern sense, and while a private-school bias was influential to an extent in most of them, all were combinations of individuals strongly interested in improvement of education in Louisiana, and in extending availability of educational opportunity.

²⁸Ibid., p. 24.

Among these early educational organizations, probably the best-known today was the Louisiana Educational Association. The activities of this organization became associated with names of prominent individuals whose careers coincided with establishment of foundations of the present State public-school system. The history of the Louisiana Educational Association was linked with the Louisiana Chautauqua, and has remained alive with the nostalgic memory of that institution, which played its own role in educational development. But evidences of cooperative movements with briefer histories at the State level, and of educational association at the local level, remain in the records of earlier periods.

Educational Associations before 1883

While it appears certain that the Louisiana Educational Association was the first such organization to attract general and lasting State-wide interest, it is also evident that other educational societies existed--if only briefly--in the State prior to 1883. These organizations seem to have been highly ambitious, but relatively ineffective and short-lived.

Teachers' Association for the State of Louisiana, 1855. In the January 6, 1919, issue of the New Orleans Times-Picayune, in a feature column entitled "Sixty-three Years Ago," was published an item of news attributed to the January 1, 1856, issue of the New Orleans Daily Delta. Paraphrasing the 1856 account, the author of "Sixty-three Years Ago" wrote:

The School Teachers' Convention met at Thibodeaux [sic] in annual session on the 29th of the previous November, but beyond a mere statement in the papers, nothing was said of the proceedings, although every parish in the state was represented. It was learned, however, that J. Bryson Bouris [sic] was elected president and among the vice-presidents were Randall Hunt and Charles Derbigny. A. V. Levison, the assistant secretary, was elected to the position of secretary. The convention was addressed in telling speeches by Dr. [Samuel] Bard, state superintendent-elect, and Judge Cole. The convention adjourned to meet in the Lyceum (City) Hall in New Orleans on the first day in March, but previous to adjournment appointed a committee on normal schools, and a committee on school books for the South.²⁹

This group met again in March, 1856, in New Orleans "according to adjournment at Thibodaux," a week later than had been planned originally.³⁰ The New Orleans Daily

²⁹"Sixty-three Years Ago," The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], January 6, 1919, p. 12.

³⁰News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], March 7, 1856.

Picayune of Sunday, March 9, 1856, related that the "Teachers' Association for the State of Louisiana has, for the past two days, been holding a convention at Lyceum Hall."³¹ The convention elected a new slate of officers, and J. B. Burrows [sic], Thibodaux resident who was named president, appointed five committees. These were: the Committee on Common Schools; the Committee on School Books; the Committee on Normal Schools; "a committee to report on the expediency of establishing a monthly journal"; and "a committee to report on the propriety of introducing pho-netic instruction into our public schools."

The final day of the convention was marked by reports from two of the committees. The Committee on Normal Schools, noting that "it is not so difficult to procure teachers of the necessary educational requirements, as to find those who are capable of imparting instruction to pupils," submitted two resolutions pertaining to the establishment of teacher-training institutions by the State of Louisiana. One resolution called on "the State to establish schools of the character proposed," while the

³¹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], March 9, 1856.

other required "the committee to draft a law for the consideration of the association" at its next meeting "in case no such schools are established during the present session of the Legislature."³² The newspaper reports of this group's activities at two conventions indicated Superintendent Bard, prime mover at the Thibodaux convention, had not given up on a project advanced earlier by his predecessor in office, John N. Carrigan, and rejected by Governor Paul O. Hebert as impractical. Carrigan, in an official report, had advocated establishment of a State normal school.³³

The account in The Daily Picayune of the other committee report follows:

The committee on Phonetic Instruction reported at length and learnedly on the wonderful advantages of the phonetic system of spelling, reading and printing, as compared with the system at present in vogue, and the superiority of the phonographic [sic] plan of writing over that at present in current use. Resolutions which accompanied the report, and were adopted, hailed phonetic instruction as one of the characteristic improvements of the age, and recommended its speedy introduction

³²Ibid.

³³"Education in Louisiana," De Bow's Review, XVIII (March, 1855), 422.

into the common schools of Louisiana.³⁴

The two-day gathering adjourned after projecting "the next meeting of the Convention for the 6th and 7th of January" in New Orleans in 1857. A search of The Daily Picayune covering the month of January, 1857, failed to reveal reference to a third annual meeting. Early in February, The Daily Picayune noted that Bard, in his report to the Legislature, had recommended as "ideas worthy of profound consideration" proposals "made last winter, by principals of some of our best schools."³⁵ Later that month, Bard's letter announcing his decision not to seek another term of office appeared in The Daily Picayune. This letter, written to some of Bard's political friends and reflecting a feeling of frustration, read in part:

In reply to your friendly letter of the 17th inst., I promptly answer that the inefficiency of the present "School System" together with the meagre and insufficient salary now allowed to the "State Superintendent" are sufficient reasons, were there no others, for my declining unconditionally to have my name brought before the approaching [nominating] committee.³⁶

³⁴News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], March 9, 1856.

³⁵News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], February 3, 1857.

³⁶News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], February 22, 1857.

State Educational Convention, 1872. During the War between the States, and in the years immediately preceding and following the war, records revealed little activity in the organization of teachers' associations in Louisiana. Beasley, however, in describing school developments in Louisiana during the Reconstruction period, told of another educational convention which met in New Orleans. "The convention," he said, "was styled as the State Educational Convention and met in Lyceum Hall in New Orleans on May 23, 24, and 25, 1872."³⁷ In promoting the meeting, State school authorities of the Reconstruction regime sought to have local school boards defray the expenses of persons attending it in response to a call which had gone throughout the State from State Superintendent of Public Education Thomas W. Conway. The Daily Picayune, in reporting the activities of this convention, declared the assemblage was "composed in a great proportion of lady school teachers, who had availed themselves of the half-day vacation granted them by the [New Orleans] school board." The newspaper also asserted that

³⁷Leon O. Beasley, "A History of Education in Louisiana during the Reconstruction Period, 1862-1877" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1957), pp. 181-82.

Conway made the convention an occasion for attempting to prove "that he had been the most efficient and economical Superintendent of Public Schools that the State ever possessed."³⁸ This assembly and the "association" of the 1850's whose conclaves were mentioned in the New Orleans papers exemplified a characteristic activity--the staging of conventions--engaged in by State educational societies before the reorganization of the Louisiana Teachers' Association in 1922 with employment of a full-time executive secretary, and establishment of permanent headquarters. Both of these early educational groups named complete slates of officers at their conventions and acted as though they intended to remain in existence indefinitely.

Formally organized teacher institutes. Prototypes of modern associations of educational personnel in Louisiana at parish and community levels may have been the formally organized local institutes referred to by Beasley as occasional developments during Reconstruction times. They "were subject to more organization internally," he declared

³⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], May 25, 1872.

in comparing them with other teacher institutes of the period, and, as a result, "tended toward perpetuating themselves." One such institute was established in Thidodaux in 1874, having "devised its own constitution under which it operated. It was required thereby to have semiannual meetings and could have special meetings in addition." Other institutes organized in this methodical manner were located in St. Charles Parish and Terrebonne Parish, and at the community of Convent.³⁹

Teachers' Association of New Orleans, 1876. Concerted action against economic adversity was the aim when New Orleans teachers formed a "financial association" in January, 1876.⁴⁰ They proposed to pool certificates with which they had been paid in lieu of cash by the school board, and to join in seeking to reduce the exorbitant discount rates imposed by brokers who traded valid currency for school-board paper. Adopting "Teachers' Association of New Orleans" as its name, the group widened its field of interest, centering some of its attention on professional

³⁹Beasley, op. cit., p. 221.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 224.

problems other than ones of a strictly economic nature. A meeting held in May, 1876, featured a debate on corporal punishment. Helped by a gift of three hundred dollars from Harper and Brothers Publishing Company, the organization established a professional reading room. It adopted and presented to the school board a resolution calling for re-election of teachers before the close of school in the spring, in order that those not to be retained might have more time to seek other employment before classes began in the fall.⁴¹

This organization of New Orleans teachers evidently languished after the initial spurt of activity, for J. E. Seaman, principal of New Orleans High School No. 1, was urging its revival in 1880, declaring: "If we wish to be felt as a power in this community, we must bring together our teachers, unify our educational forces, and widen our views by mental collision."⁴² After remarking that "three or four years since our four hundred teachers formed an association for mutual improvement and assistance,

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 224-25.

⁴²J. E. Seaman, "Teachers' Association," Louisiana Journal of Education, II (March, 1880), 23.

established a Reading Room and Exchange . . . ,"⁴³ Seaman urged, ". . . let us revive the Teachers' Association."⁴⁴ The Teachers' Association of New Orleans was able to accomplish little, however, to improve the economic condition of its members in 1880. With schools to be reopened October 4, salaries for the preceding June had not been paid. An item in the October issue of the Louisiana Journal of Education explained that the "meager resources of the City School Board" had been drawn upon "somewhat heavily by the necessity of making repairs upon school buildings." Four public-school principals had resigned. The writer of the item commented: "Broken sessions, and reduced salaries, and no pay days, are a slow but effective way of destroying a school system."⁴⁵

In these troublous times, too, members of the Teachers' Association of New Orleans still could turn their attention to matters purely cultural and educational. Having been apprised of the recent death of Henry Wadsworth

⁴³Ibid., p. 21.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 23.

⁴⁵"City Public Schools," Louisiana Journal of Education, II (October, 1880), 189.

Longfellow in 1882, they unanimously adopted a resolution of respect for the poet's memory.⁴⁶

Early Interest in Educational Journals

Harris, writing in 1924, emphasized the value of school journals in the development of public-school education in Louisiana. He wrote:

These early school journals, while financially unsuccessful, exerted a wholesome influence on the profession of teaching, and laid the foundation for the present very excellent journal, the organ and property of the Louisiana Teachers' Association.⁴⁷

The potential worth of professional journals to the cause of public-school education was recognized before the War between the States by Louisiana educators oriented toward common-school education at public expense. Support of such journals became another characteristic of early Louisiana educational associations. A news account of the 1856 convention of the Teachers' Association for Louisiana related that a special committee appointed to study the feasibility of establishing a monthly journal was not ready

⁴⁶"Educational Intelligence," Louisiana Journal of Education, IV (April, 1882), 67.

⁴⁷Thomas H. Harris, "The History of Public Education in Louisiana" (unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1924), p. 87g.

to make its report when the two-day session ended.⁴⁸ The appointment of the committee, however, itself indicated the existence of early interest in professional publications. Among educational journals later established in Louisiana to help build interest in improvement of the public-school system were: (1) the Progressive Teacher and the Louisiana School Journal, published by Henry E. Chambers; (2) Looking Ahead, published by G. D. Pickels; and (3) the Louisiana Educator, published by T. Sambola Jones.⁴⁹

The Lusher-Rogers publication. A pioneering periodical which campaigned for the cause of public-school education in Louisiana before 1883 was the Louisiana Journal of Education, which published its first issue in May, 1879. Although unaffiliated at first with a formal association of teachers, it enjoyed semiofficial status by virtue of having been founded by two well-known figures in Louisiana education in that day. Senior editor and part-owner was

⁴⁸ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], March 9, 1856.

⁴⁹ C. W. Hilton, Donald E. Shipp, and J. Berton Gremillion, The Development of Public Education in Louisiana (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, College of Education, Louisiana State University, 1965), p. 13.

Robert M. Lusher,⁵⁰ State Superintendent of Public Education, and the National Education Association's general manager for the executive board in Louisiana in 1884.⁵¹ His associate in editorship and ownership was William O. Rogers, superintendent of New Orleans public schools.⁵² Defeated for renomination to the State superintendency by Edwin H. Fay at the State Democratic Party's convention in October, 1879, Lusher became less active in the affairs of the magazine. In October, 1884, he sold his interest to Rogers,⁵³ who added to the staff as associate editors William Preston Johnston, president of Tulane University, and Richard Henry Jesse, "Dean of the Faculty of the Academic Department of the University of Louisiana [Tulane]." ⁵⁴

Backing for public schools. From its first issue,

⁵⁰Howard Turner, "Robert Mills Lusher, Louisiana Educator" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1944), p. 196.

⁵¹NEA, Proceedings, 1884, p. 68.

⁵²Turner, op. cit., p. 215.

⁵³Ibid., p. 260.

⁵⁴List of editorial staff, Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (October, 1884), 200.

the Louisiana Journal of Education sought to provide current news coverage of State educational developments. It made proposals for educational advancement. Its editorial articles strongly urged expansion and improvement of Louisiana's public-school system. Although both Lusher and Rogers had personal interests in private schools,⁵⁵ their journal did not hesitate to chide private-school supporters about lack of enthusiasm for activities designed to advance Louisiana education generally. In 1882, it admonished: "We are . . . of the impression that a little more public spirit, and a little more interest in the general cause of education, would not be injurious to some of these Academies and Colleges."⁵⁶

Teacher competence. The Louisiana Journal of Education devoted much of its space in the three or four years ending with 1883 to promotional matter written to rally support in educational circles for various agencies whose common purpose was improvement of teacher competence. In

⁵⁵Advertisements, Louisiana Journal of Education, II (February, 1881), 330.

⁵⁶"Education in Louisiana," Louisiana Journal of Education, IV (April, 1882), 47.

a broad statement of opinion outlined in an article reviewing the periodical's early activities, this journal, in the February issue of 1881, re-emphasized its contention that "Educational Journals, Teachers' Institutes, and Conventions and Associations of Teachers for mutual profit and protection, stimulate professional skill and should be encouraged."⁵⁷ In July, 1880, it presented an article entitled "Peabody Model Schools," reporting establishment of graded schools "of about one hundred children in connection with each of the Normal Schools in this city [New Orleans]." The model school for white children, the article explained, was to be located at "the Peabody Normal Seminary, No. 253 St. Charles Street," and a similar school for Negro children was to become a part of "the Peabody Normal School, on Rampart Street."⁵⁸ In June, 1883, it urged "leading teachers and school authorities of Louisiana" to consider the "importance of holding teacher institutes, at convenient points, during the approaching long summer vacation."⁵⁹

⁵⁷"Volume Second," Louisiana Journal of Education, II (February, 1881), 309.

⁵⁸"Peabody Model Schools," Louisiana Journal of Education, II (July, 1880), 148.

⁵⁹"Educational Intelligence," Louisiana Journal of Education, V (June, 1883), 125.

In September, Superintendent Fay issued a circular letter urging "parish secretaries or superintendents throughout the State" to see to it that teachers attended institutes he planned to hold.⁶⁰ In October, the Louisiana Journal of Education publicized institute planning by listing towns in which institutes had been scheduled for October and November,⁶¹ and, in December, relayed to its readers Superintendent Fay's report of the enthusiasm with which these institutes had been received by teachers and by others not actively engaged in the work of education--"judges, lawyers, and the leading citizens . . . , many of whom expressed the warmest interest, and, in some instances, participated in the exercises."⁶² Lay interest in institutes, as described by the journal of 1883, remained high in some areas for many years. In January, 1884, the journal advised that the "Rev. A. R. Horne, who was engaged with State Superintendent Fay in holding Teachers' Institutes in various parts of our

⁶⁰News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], September 14, 1883.

⁶¹"Educational Intelligence," Louisiana Journal of Education, V (October, 1883), 197.

⁶²Untitled article, Louisiana Journal of Education, V (December, 1883), 255.

State, has returned to his home in Allentown, Pa."⁶³

Financing education. Public-school finance also was a concern of the Louisiana Journal of Education. It noted "the non-existence of a free public school in the thriving town of Lake Charles," and the fact that the only such school in Tangipahoa Parish was located at Amite. The magazine found that, in another part of the State, the Thibodaux Sentinel was urging the staging of "varied entertainments" to procure funds to finance public schools.⁶⁴ It expressed the opinion that police juries in Louisiana were allowing "the pittance of twenty cents per child, per annum, from the State" to accrue, and were devoting "their energies, meanwhile, to the encouragement of select schools, established by private enterprise, and maintained exclusively by private tuition fees."⁶⁵ Noting that delinquent poll taxes totalled \$1,860 in Terrebonne Parish,

⁶³"Educational Intelligence," Louisiana Journal of Education, V (January, 1884), 296.

⁶⁴"Calcasieu and Tangipahoa," Louisiana Journal of Education, II (November, 1880), 225.

⁶⁵"Private Education in Rural Louisiana," Louisiana Journal of Education, II (October, 1880), 182-83.

the Louisiana Journal of Education said it could not "help thinking . . . it could be made the means of accomplishing much good in the school-room."⁶⁶ The magazine strongly advocated federal aid for education because it believed the responsibility of public-school education had become a load "so large and heavy that the South, unaided, cannot carry it."⁶⁷ As early as 1879 the periodical was expressing misgivings concerning the tax base provided for education by the State Constitution adopted in that year.⁶⁸ Anxiety over the impact of weak school finance on teacher welfare and the public-school establishment as a whole was evidenced by the publication's treatment of the New Orleans salary crisis of the early 1880's.⁶⁹

Educational Associations between 1883 and 1892

Most authors who have written about the beginnings of formal associations of teachers and other educators in

⁶⁶"Educational Intelligence," Louisiana Journal of Education, IV (April, 1882), 65.

⁶⁷"National Aid for Education," Louisiana Journal of Education, IV (April, 1882), 43.

⁶⁸"The Public Schools of New Orleans," Louisiana Journal of Education, I (December, 1879), 198.

⁶⁹"City Public Schools," loc. cit.

Louisiana pointed to the Louisiana Educational Association as an immediate predecessor of today's Louisiana Teachers' Association. Mention was made less often of another organization claiming State-wide interest which arose about the same time--the "Louisiana Education Society," with New Orleans as the center of its activity. A circular letter authorized to be sent to the "various Boards of School Directors throughout the State"⁷⁰ advised: "The Louisiana Education Society has been organized for the single purpose of promoting education in the State of Louisiana."⁷¹ Its activities for a number of years were carried on concurrently with those of the Louisiana Educational Association, and sometimes coincided with them. The Louisiana Journal of Education identified itself as official organ of both, and listed them as separate organizations in its masthead.⁷²

Louisiana Education Society. There is evidence that

⁷⁰"Educational Intelligence," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (March, 1884), 27.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 25.

⁷²Masthead, Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (February, 1885), 348.

support gained by the Louisiana Education Society was regional in scope. When the Louisiana Journal of Education was designated official organ of the Louisiana Educational Association, the periodical was already the journal of the Louisiana Education Society. Its editors observed: "We beg to assure our friends of North Louisiana that we shall endeavor to merit their good opinion. . . ." ⁷³ The Louisiana Education Society's early standing committees were comprised predominantly of New Orleans residents. Among these active members of the organization were: R. M. Walmsley, banker and civic leader; ⁷⁴ B. T. Walshe, treasurer of the school board, ⁷⁵ "distinguished Confederate soldier" who "enjoyed the respect of the entire community"; ⁷⁶ Ulric Bettison, veteran teacher who later served for a short time as superintendent of New Orleans public schools; S. S. Carlisle, president of the school board in

⁷³Editorial, Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (October, 1884), 200.

⁷⁴John S. Kendall, History of New Orleans (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1922), II, 530, 575, and 591.

⁷⁵News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], February 16, 1883.

⁷⁶Kendall, op. cit., I, p. 443.

1883;⁷⁷ Warren Easton, New Orleans public-school educator who served a term as State Superintendent of Public Education;⁷⁸ and Stanford E. Chaillé, later dean of the medical school of Tulane University.⁷⁹

School legislation. From its foundation, the Louisiana Education Society stressed the need for legislative action to improve public-school conditions in Louisiana. At a general meeting of the society held in Tulane Hall in New Orleans in March, 1884, R. H. Browne, chairman of a committee on memorials, presented an outline of goals proposed for the organization. A campaign to secure legislative action at the State level for the advancement of education predominated in this outline. Legislative goals proposed included: (1) a constitutional amendment to allow police juries and municipal governments to impose a special tax for education, if authorized by

⁷⁷News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], February 16, 1883.

⁷⁸Minns Sledge Robertson, Public Education in Louisiana after 1898 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, College of Education, Louisiana State University, 1952), p. 227.

⁷⁹Kendall, op. cit., II, p. 759.

local electors; (2) amendment of State laws affecting education, or passage of an entirely new school Act; (3) an Act to bring strict enforcement of poll-tax collection. Browne's committee proposed memorializing the Legislature to take "prompt action" on these and other matters affecting education.⁸⁰ The Louisiana Education Society also sent a memorial to Congress in 1884 urging federal aid for public-school education.⁸¹

Directors of the society held regular weekly meetings in the spring of 1884. In its May issue of that year the Louisiana Journal of Education announced that the directors had prepared formal bills to be presented to the Legislature to implement the proposals of Browne's committee.⁸² In July, the publication noted that "numerous educational bills" had been submitted to the Legislature. In addition to bills to accomplish the purposes already mentioned, the proposed legislation included an Act

⁸⁰"The Louisiana Educational [sic] Society," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (April, 1884), 50.

⁸¹"The Educational Society," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (April, 1884), 60.

⁸²"Louisiana Educational [sic] Society," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (May, 1884), 97.

"creating and maintaining a State Normal School for whites," and providing for a State-wide program of teacher institutes to be initiated by the normal school, and an Act "giving relief to the school teachers of the State holding unredeemed certificates for past services."⁸³

The Louisiana Education Society was disappointed at the fate of its legislative program for 1884. While the Legislature increased the tax rate for support of public schools from one mill to one and one-half mills, according to the Louisiana Journal of Education, and appropriated "\$6,000 for the establishment of a state normal school," other legislation backed by the education association failed to pass. "A very carefully prepared school-bill was introduced into the Senate in the early part of the session," but was indefinitely postponed when it reached the House too late for passage. An act increasing the poll tax and providing for its more efficient collection also failed to pass.⁸⁴ The time for general advancement in

⁸³"State Legislation," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (July, 1884), 163.

⁸⁴Untitled article, Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (October, 1884), 197-98.

public-school education in Louisiana had not yet arrived, the society's official journal conceded:

Public sentiment in favor of education moves onward even in our Legislative halls, but that it has some distance yet to travel before it reaches a full appreciation of the great question will, we fear, be only too apparent from . . . the work of the last General Assembly, from whose deliberations much was expected by the friends of education in Louisiana.⁸⁵

The Louisiana Education Society continued its efforts to influence legislation. It prepared a new legislative program for 1886, including a bill providing "an increased appropriation for the State Normal School, at Natchitoches,"⁸⁶ an institution for which the society had earlier claimed partial credit because the "law under which this college . . . is established was framed by the Louisiana Educational [sic] Society."⁸⁷

Lectures and institutes. By supporting series of lectures and programs of teacher institutes, the Louisiana Education Society sought to encourage popularization of

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶"The Louisiana Educational [sic] Society," Louisiana Journal of Education, VIII (February, 1887), 309.

⁸⁷"The Louisiana State Normal School," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (February, 1885), 349.

public schools and to improve teacher competence, aims taken earlier by its adopted journal. The society sponsored in 1884 a series of lectures on education by A. D. Mayo, assistant editor of the New England Journal of Education. Mayo returned to Louisiana in 1886 and the Louisiana Journal of Education announced: "Our esteemed friend, Rev. A. D. Mayo, arrived in New Orleans on the 30th ult. . . . He starts in a few days for a trip through Louisiana, under the auspices of the Louisiana Education Society."⁸⁸ The journal later reported that Mayo addressed large audiences "at Shreveport, Minden, Natchitoches and other points."⁸⁹

Residents of the New Orleans area provided influential members of the Louisiana Education Society. These residents took an immediate interest in the New Orleans Teachers' Association. The Louisiana Education Society pushed also for the organization of local associations of teachers in other communities in the State, and tried to

⁸⁸Untitled article, Louisiana Journal of Education, VII (February, 1886), 316.

⁸⁹"Editorial Notes," Louisiana Journal of Education, VIII (March, 1886), 30.

cooperate with them. One such effort at cooperation was made at Lake Charles, where a drive to have a new public-school building erected was unsuccessful in 1884.⁹⁰ Local associations formed as a result of the new State normal school's institute program in the spring and summer of 1885 were noted with "pleasure" by the society's official journal. "Supt. Easton, Prof. Grace, Dr. Sheib, Principal, and Prof. C. D. McPuckette, Assistant of the State Normal School, appear to have been untiring in their efforts."⁹¹

State teachers' association. Steps taken at a meeting of the Louisiana Educational Association at Minden in 1884 indicated that neither the Louisiana Education Society nor the Louisiana Educational Association regarded themselves as true teachers' associations. The Louisiana Journal of Education reported that a "meeting of teachers from various parts of the State . . . was called for the purpose of organizing a Louisiana State Teachers'

⁹⁰Leila Aline Scarlett, "The History of Education in Lake Charles Prior to 1907" (unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1938), p. 94.

⁹¹"Teachers' Institutes," Louisiana Journal of Education, VII (June, 1885), 115.

Association."⁹² William O. Rogers, of New Orleans, upon "motion of Col. D. F. Boyd, of Baton Rouge," was elected president of the association, which was "to be composed of members engaged in teaching or directly connected therewith in the State of Louisiana." The amount of dues set for each member was one dollar, a sum which seems significant.⁹³ Annual dues charged by the Louisiana Education Society at that time amounted to two dollars, and, in December, 1884, the fee was increased to five dollars,⁹⁴ a large sum for a teacher of the period to pay. The one-dollar membership fee suggests that the new organization actually was intended for the rank and file of people who were teachers. A later meeting was scheduled for New Orleans in February, 1885,⁹⁵ during the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition. Record, however, of a second meeting seems lacking, and the Louisiana State

⁹²"State Teachers' Association," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (October, 1884), 201.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴"Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Educational [sic] Society," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (January, 1885), 315.

⁹⁵Untitled article, Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (November, 1884), 241.

Teachers' Association as planned in 1884 failed to survive.

National and international conventions. The Louisiana Education Society took an active part in educational developments of national and international scope which were scheduled in connection with the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans in 1885. The Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association met in New Orleans during the Exposition, as did the "International Educational Congress" and a Committee of Fifty representing the National Education Association itself.⁹⁶ At the convention of the National Education Association at Madison, Wisconsin, in July, 1884, resolutions authorized appointment of the Committee of Fifty,⁹⁷ and formation of "an international council of education" scheduled to hold its first meeting "at New Orleans the coming winter."⁹⁸ At its convention in

⁹⁶"The Educational Convention," Louisiana Journal of Education, VII (March, 1885), 20.

⁹⁷NEA, Proceedings, 1884, p. 17.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 8.

Washington in February, the Department of Superintendence voted to accept an invitation, delivered in person by Superintendent Rogers, to hold its 1885 meeting in New Orleans during the Exposition.⁹⁹ Among participants in the meetings at New Orleans were: F. Louis Soldan, president of the National Education Association; John Eaton, United States Commissioner of Education; E. E. White, of Cincinnati, Ohio, who had offered the resolution calling for appointment of the Committee of Fifty; George Hicks, assistant inspector of schools on the Island of Jamaica;¹⁰⁰ B. Buisson and Isacho Hattori, identified respectively as "French commissioner of education" and "vice-president of the University of Tokyo."¹⁰¹ The journal of the Louisiana Education Society declared that the combined gathering "was important in numbers, and, we trust, in the influence which it will exercise upon the cause of education in the Southwest."¹⁰²

⁹⁹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], February 19, 1884.

¹⁰⁰"The Educational Convention," op. cit., pp. 20-21.

¹⁰¹Untitled article, Louisiana Journal of Education, VII (June, 1885), 117.

¹⁰²"The Educational Convention," loc. cit.

Louisiana Educational Association. Most authors who have written about the Louisiana Educational Association agreed that it was organized in 1883. Ives, characterizing it as "a convention-type of organization, offering a two-day program of addresses and discussions of educational conditions in the State," said that it held its first meeting in 1883 in Homer.¹⁰³ Harris named neither an exact date nor an exact place when he wrote: "The Louisiana Educational Association was organized about 1883, probably in the City of Minden, North Louisiana."¹⁰⁴ Townsend, discussing the origin of the Louisiana Chautauqua, may have removed some of the obscurity about the organization's birth when he wrote:

The principal contributing factor which led to the establishment of the Chautauqua in Louisiana was the organization, in Homer, in 1883, of a Louisiana Educational Association by the late J. W. Nicholson, then a country school teacher, G. D. Alexander, T. S. Schly [sic] and Mrs. Schly, P. A. [sic] Smith, A. C. Calhoun, Mrs. Perryman and a few others. Warren Easton, at that time [sic] State Superintendent of Public Schools,

¹⁰³C. A. Ives, As I Remember (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, College of Education, Louisiana State University, 1964), p. 104.

¹⁰⁴T. H. Harris, The Story of Public Education in Louisiana (New Orleans: Delgado Trades School, 1924), p. 75.

became interested, as did others; and at the next meeting in Minden, in 1884, such prominent names as Col. T. D. Boyd, Col. D. F. Boyd and Mrs. Mattie Williams of Shreveport were added to the membership. . . .¹⁰⁵

The Louisiana Journal of Education, in its issue of April, 1884, published an "Address of the Louisiana Educational Association" to "the Citizens of Louisiana" which referred to a meeting "recently held at Homer."¹⁰⁶ A later meeting of the organization at Minden in August, 1884, was mentioned in the October, 1884, issue of the periodical.¹⁰⁷ An article published in another education journal--the Louisiana Educator--called the 1891 convention of the Louisiana Educational Association at Ruston the agency's "Eighth Annual Convention,"¹⁰⁸ a label which established the Minden meeting of August, 1884, as the first annual convention, and, by implication, the earlier gathering "recently held at Homer" as an organizational conference. In February, 1884, months before the Louisiana Educational

¹⁰⁵H. E. Townsend, "A History of the Louisiana Chautauqua" (unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1929), p. 4.

¹⁰⁶"Good News from North Louisiana," Louisiana Journal of Education, VI (April, 1884), 50.

¹⁰⁷"State Teachers' Association," loc. cit.

¹⁰⁸"Eighth Annual Convention," Louisiana Educator, I (August, 1891), 9.

Association's first convention, the executive board of the Louisiana Education Society, meeting in New Orleans, adopted a resolution offered by William Preston Johnston "that correspondence be opened by the Parochial Committee with the Louisiana Educational Association domiciled in Homer, with a view to cooperation and concert of action."¹⁰⁹ In an article published in Louisiana School Work in March, 1915, R. A. Smith, who identified himself as the first treasurer of the Louisiana Educational Association, declared that actually two organizational meetings were held in Homer in 1883--one on July 27 and the other on August 27.¹¹⁰ Obviously both Homer and Minden were closely associated with the formation of the organization.

Varied membership. Harris emphasized the fact that membership of the Louisiana Educational Association was varied, including both public-school and private-school figures, both professional teachers and individuals who joined simply because they were interested in improvement

¹⁰⁹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], February 8, 1884.

¹¹⁰R. A. Smith, "A Reminiscence," Louisiana School Work, III (March, 1915), 23-24.

in quality and quantity of education in the State of Louisiana. As early lay participants in activities of the organization he identified many of the persons mentioned by Townsend and pointed to several others as well, including: J. H. Shepherd, Shreveport lawyer; H. H. Hargrove, newspaperman; D. M. Sholars and A. A. Gunby, Monroe attorneys; and Mrs. C. H. Trousdale, of Monroe.¹¹¹ Educator members with public-education backgrounds listed by Harris as participants included: A. T. Prescott, W. H. Goodale, and W. G. Stubbs, all of Louisiana State University; C. E. Byrd, who joined in the association's undertakings after arriving in Louisiana in 1889;¹¹² ¹¹³ and W. U. Richardson, superintendent of schools of Bienville Parish. Many of these, and other educators who took part in the group's pursuits, had, during their careers, close connections with both public and private educational activities. Mrs. Mattie H. Williams, for example, secretary of the Louisiana

¹¹¹Harris, loc. cit.

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 75-76.

¹¹³Rodney Cline, Builders of Louisiana Education (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, College of Education, Louisiana State University, 1963), p. 83.

Educational Association, and for many years an outstanding member of the Shreveport public-school faculty, began her career as a teacher in 1885 "when she became First Assistant in the Kate P. Nelson Seminary, one of the leading private schools for young ladies in north Louisiana."¹¹⁴ In correspondence with the Louisiana Journal of Education, Mrs. Williams, in a time of abbreviated public-school sessions, suggested expansion of educational opportunity in Caddo Parish by requesting teachers in the rural areas "to open private schools when the public school term shall have expired."¹¹⁵

Louisiana Chautauqua. One of the important contributions made to the development of education in Louisiana by the Louisiana Educational Association was establishment of the Louisiana Chautauqua. While Chautauqua activity continued in the State after 1892, it is treated here because of its origination by the Louisiana Educational Association.

¹¹⁴"Mrs. Mattie H. Williams," Louisiana School Review, XV (February, 1908), 30.

¹¹⁵"Educational Intelligence," Louisiana Journal of Education, VIII (May, 1886), 86.

Although institution of a State-wide reading-club program similar to the Chautauqua movement had been proposed as early as 1885,¹¹⁶ Mrs. Mattie H. Williams was credited by the Louisiana School Review with having provided the stimulus which led to formal organization of the Louisiana Chautauqua. This stimulus came in the form of a paper--"A Plea for a Louisiana Chautauqua"--read by Mrs. Williams at an annual convention of the Louisiana Educational Association in the late 1880's.¹¹⁷ Townsend wrote that "when the plea . . . was presented by Mrs. M. H. Williams at the meeting in Ruston in 1889 the idea was received with unanimous approval."¹¹⁸ Formal plans for establishment of a Chautauqua were adopted at a meeting of the Louisiana Educational Association in Shreveport in 1890, and a committee of three--"Col. T. D. Boyd, T. Sambola Jones, and T. K. FountLeRoy [sic]"--was named to obtain a charter.¹¹⁹ The charter, prepared in 1890,

¹¹⁶"Reading Clubs and Home Work," Louisiana Journal of Education, VII (April, 1885), 42.

¹¹⁷"Mrs. Mattie H. Williams," op. cit., p. 31.

¹¹⁸Townsend, op. cit., p. 4.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 5.

provided, among other things, that "meetings of the Louisiana Educational Association shall be held" at the Chautauqua.¹²⁰

The Louisiana Chautauqua was a strong influence for progress in Louisiana education for more than a decade. Currie, noting that around the turn of the century Caddo Parish teachers were "deprived of the educational spirit and enthusiasm so essential to a struggling school system," declared that the Chautauqua was one of the first influences to help make up for this deprivation.¹²¹ The Chautauqua site near Ruston was often named as the meeting place for various educational gatherings. In July, 1896, parish superintendents "to the number of thirty or thirty-five, assembled at the Chautauqua grounds" to consult with State Superintendent of Public Education J. V. Calhoun.¹²² The executive committee of the Louisiana State Public

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 6.

¹²¹Cora Currie, "Some Aspects of the Development of Public Schools in Caddo Parish during the Administration of Superintendent C. E. Byrd: 1908-1926" (unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1942), p. 17.

¹²²"The Parish Superintendents' Convention," Louisiana School Review, II (September, 1896), 5.

School Teachers' Association met there during the same month to lay plans for the convention to be held in Lake Charles.¹²³ A year later, the Louisiana Chautauqua was said to take pride in "its successful career of six summers" and to be looking forward "confidently to a glorious and prosperous future."¹²⁴ At its convention in New Orleans in 1898, the Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association adopted resolutions backing "the purpose and plan" of the Chautauqua and pledging "earnest support and active interest" in increasing its usefulness.¹²⁵ A building program at the Chautauqua site was under way in 1899, and various individuals and institutions were providing assistance.¹²⁶ In 1902, J. B. Aswell, later to be elected State Superintendent of Public Education, was manager of the Louisiana Chautauqua. He made plans to hold

¹²³"The State Teachers' Association," Louisiana School Review, II (September, 1896), 9.

¹²⁴Editorial, Louisiana School Review, III (September, 1897), 3.

¹²⁵"Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association," Louisiana School Review, VI (January, 1899), 25.

¹²⁶Untitled article, Louisiana School Review, VI (April, 1899), 25.

a "ten days" session, with two platform attractions for each day." A summer school was to be held at the Chautauqua grounds in June.¹²⁷ O. B. Staples was named to manage the Chautauqua in the 1904 season. He planned a program to begin that year with a one-week teacher institute, instructed by a corps of educators led by Superintendent Aswell.¹²⁸ Harris said that "by the middle of the 1890's" the Louisiana Chautauqua was "more of a summer school than a chautauqua" and "finally there was no need for the chautauqua, and it passed out of existence."¹²⁹

Local teachers' associations. By 1891, professional teachers' associations at the local level existed in several parishes, and some of these groups appear to have been very active. The extent to which the Louisiana Educational Association was specifically instrumental in formation of local associations is problematical, but

¹²⁷"Educational News and Personals," Louisiana School Review, IX (April, 1902), 30.

¹²⁸"Louisiana Chautauqua," Louisiana School Review, XI (May, 1904), 283.

¹²⁹T. H. Harris, The Memoirs of T. H. Harris (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, College of Education, Louisiana State University, 1963), p. 87.

certainly the interest in education which its activities strengthened was effective. About 1890, Parish Superintendent John McNeese was urging the Calcasieu Parish School Board to "recognize the efforts of the Parish Teachers' Association in organizing a training school for teachers for a term of six weeks during the summer."¹³⁰

Brown observed that a teachers' association was organized in Natchitoches Parish in 1888.¹³¹ An educational journal reported in 1891 that several "parishes in the State have well-organized and successful Teachers' Associations, notably Rapides and Caddo."¹³² Of the work of these associations, the Louisiana Educator declared:

. . . A professional spirit is upbuilt or strengthened, an esprit de corps fostered; old fogysm pushed to the wall, new ideas, new resources, new methods are constantly evolved by the frequent interchange of ideas; intellectual life is quickened, enthusiasm is aroused, and love for the profession generated by the inspiring tournaments on the floor

¹³⁰Irman D. Bayne, "The History of Education in Calcasieu Parish" (unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1933), p. 39.

¹³¹Edward J. Brown, "History of Education in Natchitoches Parish" (unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1932), p. 29.

¹³²"The Teachers' Association," Louisiana Educator, I (June, 1891), 16.

of the educational arena.¹³³

In a paper read before the teachers' association of Iberville Parish and West Baton Rouge Parish in October, 1891, Mrs. L. E. Senatte advised that "the best plan to perpetuate the Parish Association, is to develop it into a social as well as an educational gathering."¹³⁴

State Teachers' Association. Apparently considering itself a body not distinctly representative of the teaching profession, the Louisiana Educational Association, on at least two occasions, gave its influence to efforts to establish a State association of teachers. The first unsuccessful effort, made in cooperation with the Louisiana Education Society in 1884, has been described earlier in this chapter. At its convention at Ruston in June, 1891, the Louisiana Educational Association made an effort on its own. A committee "was appointed to meet at an early date and report on a plan of organization." Members of this committee were "J. Calvit, Alexandria, Chairman; J. V.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴"The Best Method of Increasing and Perpetuating the Usefulness of the Parish Association," Louisiana Educator, I (November, 1891), 3.

Calhoun, New Orleans; C. E. Byrd, Monroe; E. W. Howe, New Iberia; Miss L. M. Carter, [N]atchitoches; Miss Hattie Lawrence, Homer; Professor J. E. Johnston, Plain Dealing."¹³⁵ Thomas D. Boyd and Warren Easton spoke in behalf of the project.¹³⁶ The need for its Chautauqua faded during the first decade of the twentieth century and the activities of the Louisiana Educational Association also dwindled. Stephens, writing of the organization of the Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association, declared: ". . . As the trend of modern progress was clearly in this direction, the older body disbanded and most of its members joined forces with the new."¹³⁷

¹³⁵"Eighth Annual Convention," op. cit., p. 11.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷E. L. Stephens, "The Period of the Constitution of 1879" (Part III in series entitled "The Public Schools of Louisiana"), Louisiana School Review, XV (April, 1908), 23.

CHAPTER II

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOUISIANA TEACHERS'

ASSOCIATION, 1892-1922

Emergence of the Louisiana Teachers' Association as an agency thoughtfully designed by teachers for advancement of teacher welfare, and of the public-school program generally, occurred with the provision for establishment of a permanent headquarters and employment of a full-time executive secretary in 1922. Before 1922, however, though existing as a rather loosely integrated organization of educators, the Louisiana Teachers' Association had done much for advancement of public education in Louisiana. Between 1892 and 1922, the Association was one of the agencies employed by the State's educational leadership in promoting professional and lay interest in the improvement of public education by means of legislation and through institution of advanced programs and improved educational methods. Since 1922, many organizational changes have taken place, and the organization has grown increasingly independent of external pressures. The Association had

three names during the period covered by this study--Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association, from 1892 to 1915; Louisiana Teachers' Association, from 1915 to 1947; and Louisiana Education Association, from 1947 to 1956, when the organization reassumed the name by which it is known today. Some of the circumstances attending the Association's establishment suggested reaction of public-school teachers against private-school interests, and against school administrative personnel not actually engaged in teaching. The Association's continuity as a functioning body has remained unbroken since 1892. A chronological list of Association presidents and convention sites is presented in Appendix A.

I. ORGANIZATION AT ALEXANDRIA, 1892

That the Louisiana Educational Association took an active interest in establishment of the organization which grew into today's Louisiana Teachers' Association was demonstrated, as has been pointed out in Chapter I, by appointment of a committee to prepare a plan of organization for a State teachers' association, and to make an early report on the progress of its undertaking. The

committee was appointed at a special meeting called at 2:30 p.m. on the final day of the Louisiana Educational Association's 1891 convention, held July 24, 25, and 26 at Ruston. Before members of the committee were named, "Mr. Long and Dr. Wespy of Rapides, Hon. Warren Easton and Col. T. D. Boyd spoke of the need of such an association and in favor of its speedy foundation."¹ The Louisiana Educator reported that "the meeting adjourned with bright hopes of a successful realization of the most cherished plan of the progressive teachers of Louisiana."²

An eyewitness account of later events leading up to the organization of the Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association at Alexandria revealed a conflict in plans which led to postponement of the first attempt at holding an organizational meeting. Himes wrote that W. J. Calvit, of Rapides Parish, who was listed first among members of the organizational committee appointed at the 1891 convention of the Louisiana Educational Association, issued a call for delegates to attend an organizational

¹"Eighth Annual Convention," Louisiana Educator, I (August, 1891), 11.

²Ibid.

meeting at Alexandria in the spring of 1892, but that the conclave "failed to materialize, mainly because the Louisiana Educational Association had issued its call for the teachers to assemble at the newly organized Chautauqua, Ruston, La." Calvit issued a second, more effective call for a meeting in Alexandria during the Christmas holidays of 1892.³ The confusion in spring schedules may have been one of the reasons for Calvit's insistence that membership in the new organization be limited to teachers in public schools. After "a heated discussion . . . over the question of admitting any but public school teachers to membership," Calvit's viewpoint was accepted and the organizers adopted "that long, cumbersome name, the Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association."⁴ A Constitution was adopted, Calvit was elected the Association's first president, and the meeting was adjourned after scheduling its first formal convention at New Iberia, December 26, 27, and 28, 1893.⁵ Formal notice of

³R. L. Himes, "Organization of the Louisiana State School Teachers' Association," Louisiana School Work, III (April, 1915), 59-60.

⁴Ibid., p. 60.

⁵E. L. Stephens, "My First Visit to New Iberia," Louisiana School Work, III (March, 1915), 11.

organization of the Association was taken by the New Orleans Daily Picayune in March, 1893, when the newspaper printed the text of a circular being "generally disseminated" to parish superintendents and public-school teachers of the State. After recounting the news of the organizational meeting at Alexandria, December 23, 1892, the circular exhorted:

. . . Let us act on the principle that "in union there is strength," and as a strong organized body we will devise better methods of teaching, demand more effective school legislation, create a livelier interest in, and secure for our schools, a system that will stand through the storms of generations to come. In conclusion let us all work for the success of the association and especially for the December convention and contribute our best efforts at all times to this educational movement.⁶

II. FIRST ANNUAL CONVENTION AT NEW IBERIA, DECEMBER, 1893

Ives pointed out that the Association operated "on a convention basis . . . without an executive officer, permanent records, or permanent domicile" during the first few decades of its existence.⁷ Because Association activities

⁶News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], March 26, 1893.

⁷C. A. Ives, As I Remember (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, College of Education, Louisiana State University, 1964), pp. 109-10.

at New Iberia in December, 1893, were generally typical of convention programs presented during the early decades and even later, events at the first formal gathering will be presented here in more detail than will be devoted to later ones. Typical of many Association conclaves down through the years was the prominence given platform oratory and reports of committee activity.

According to The Daily Picayune, the session convened at 4 p.m., Tuesday, December 26, in the Opera House at New Iberia with "about 125 members present, representing all parts of the state except the Fifth congressional district, which has only one parish with a delegate."⁸ The afternoon session was devoted largely to addresses. President Calvit delivered his "Inaugural"; W. J. Burke presented an "Address of Welcome" in behalf of New Iberia; and State Superintendent of Public Education A. D. Lafargue gave a "Response to Address of Welcome." These and other formal addresses and lectures on various topics made up the principal part of the convention program, a circumstance which was to be characteristic of later conventions.

⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 27, 1893.

Governor Murphy J. Foster was first to speak at the Tuesday evening session. He was followed by Judge A. C. Allen, who delivered an address entitled "Taxation: An Ethical View," and by James H. Dillard, of Tulane University, whose subject was "Taxation from a Revenue Standpoint." Stephens listed other speakers and the subjects of their lectures and addresses: J. V. Calhoun, of New Orleans, "Grade Work"; R. L. Himes, of Louisiana State Normal College, "Teachers' Reading Circles"; A. G. Singletary, of Plaquemine, "Uniformity of Textbooks"; Judge Joseph A. Breaux, of New Iberia, "Louisiana School Laws"; Alcée Fortier, of Tulane University, "The Teacher"; D. B. Showalter, of Bastrop, "Teachers' Responsibilities"; J. P. Sanford, "Old Times and New" and "Walks in Rome"; Thomas D. Boyd, president of Louisiana State Normal College, "Institutes"; William P. Johnston, president of Tulane University, "The State as a Factor in Civilization."⁹ The predominance of formal address and lecture on convention programs drew occasional mild criticism from Association ranks,¹⁰ but the practice continued. Many years later a

⁹Stephens, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

¹⁰"Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Convention," Louisiana School Review, VI (January, 1899), 23.

secretary of the Association endorsed it anew by declaring: ". . . The chief function of an association of teachers is to make it possible for its members to hear . . . leaders once a year."¹¹

In discussing the activities of the National Education Association, Wesley wrote: "At the earliest meetings of the NEA the members knew all about committees. They used them from the beginning."¹² The same may be said of the Louisiana teachers' organization. "Appointment of Committees" was listed as an official part of the business session scheduled for the first afternoon of the Association's earliest convention. On the final day, reports were heard from the Executive Committee, the Election Committee, the Legislative Committee, and the Auditing Committee. Stephens reported that, as chairman of the Enrollment Committee, he received a receipt from Treasurer W. B. Hale for \$260.00 "in payment of annual dues collected."¹³ Committees played an important part in the work

¹¹"Louisiana State Teachers' Association," Louisiana School Work, III (March, 1915), 26.

¹²Edgar B. Wesley, The First Hundred Years (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 292.

¹³Stephens, op. cit., p. 13.

of the Association to the present day.

III. ACTIVITIES PRECEDING THE CONSTITUTION OF 1898

Harris, referring to the convention which formulated the Louisiana Constitution of 1898, said: "Public school development [in Louisiana] really dates from the action of this convention."¹⁴ The new organization of Louisiana teachers, however, did not mark time between its establishment in 1892 and the adoption of the Constitution of 1898. It moved immediately toward realization of its basic aims--to "elevate the profession of teaching and promote the interest of education in Louisiana." . . ."¹⁵ Part of the Association's activity during the interim was directed toward creation of the improved legal climate which the Constitution of 1898 eventually provided. In conjunction with moves for favorable political development, the organization stressed public relations and arranged for the

¹⁴T. H. Harris, The Memoirs of T. H. Harris (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, College of Education, Louisiana State University, 1963), p. 183.

¹⁵News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], March 26, 1893.

founding of a State journal of education. In the professional area, the Association worked to strengthen teacher competence and the public-school curriculum, and to improve articulation of educational programs.

Teacher Training

From its founding in 1884, Louisiana State Normal College at Natchitoches was concerned directly with improvement of professional skills among public-school teachers. Thomas D. Boyd was president of the institution when the Association's Legislative Committee, of which he was chairman, drafted a bill creating the position of State institute conductor and providing for State institute programs of twenty weeks annually. The bill was enacted into law by the Legislature in 1894.¹⁶ R. L. Himes, a member of Louisiana State Normal College's faculty, offered a formal proposal at the Association's first convention that a teachers' reading circle be organized on a State-wide basis, "to afford a steady forward movement to its

¹⁶E. L. Stephens, "The Period of the Constitution of 1879," (Part III in series entitled "The Public Schools of Louisiana"), Louisiana School Review, XV (April, 1908), 23.

members, and to include those who cannot attend these annual convocations."¹⁷ On the last day of its first convention, the new organization of Louisiana teachers put Himes's plan into effect by adopting the report of a special committee which "reported that it is wise and expedient to organize a state reading circle, and recommend a plan of the work required, four years to complete the course assigned. . . ."¹⁸ The special committee's report to the convention the following year indicated "a fine year's work, and that many of the teachers embraced its services."¹⁹ The Louisiana State Teachers' Reading Circle became an agency "instituted for the professional advancement and improvement of teachers, and for the upbuilding of the cause of education, by the Louisiana Public School Teachers' Association [sic]."²⁰ Association

¹⁷News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 28, 1893.

¹⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 29, 1893.

¹⁹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 30, 1894.

²⁰"The Reading Circle," Louisiana School Review, I (March, 1896), 8.

leaders worked to correlate the reading-circle program with other movements for professional improvement. The Reading Circle's department in the Association's journal stressed this articulation of programs in education of teachers.

The department declared:

To make all of the [teacher-training agencies] work along the same line and bring about the improvement of our teaching body is the movement now under consideration. The summer school will be the center about which the work will be arranged. The Reading Circle will connect the session[s] of the summer school and form the basis for the monthly institute program.²¹

The list of books selected for use in the reading-circle program for 1897 reflected joint emphasis of professional and academic subject matter. It included:

Eclectic Physical Geography, Elementary Meteorology, Child and Nature, The Story of Our Continent, and Footprints of Travel.²² The Louisiana School Review advised:

The work of professional improvement is now fairly started and this combination of the reading circle with the summer school and institute work properly organizes and concentrates the forces, and realizes a plan long desired by many of our teachers. The course will form the connecting link between successive terms of the summer normal.²³

²¹"The Reading Circle," Louisiana School Review, II (January, 1897), 7.

²²"The Reading Circle," Louisiana School Review, II (February, 1897), 8.

²³Ibid.

The Reading Circle was the basis for organization of local associations of teachers in some localities. The superintendent of schools in Claiborne Parish, for instance, "sent for seventy-five circulars for the use of his teachers. He has organized his teachers into a parish association, and they will follow the R. C. course."²⁴ And, recorded the Louisiana School Review, the superintendent of Washington Parish reported: "'A few months ago but three teachers read any educational literature. Now almost all of them are reading educational literature.' His parish . . . has now a teachers association."²⁵ That institutes, local teachers' associations, and the Reading Circle were closely related in the estimation of educational leaders of the period was indicated by an account in the Louisiana School Review concerning a development in Rapides Parish:

The Rapides Teacher's Association adopted the R. C. course as the basis for its future work. Mr. Myers, principal of the Alexandria High School, said that for some time he had felt convinced that the teachers were

²⁴"The Reading Circle," Louisiana School Review, III (September, 1897), 10.

²⁵"News Notes and Personals," Louisiana School Review, III (December, 1897), 5.

not accomplishing what they should accomplish in these institutes. He thinks now that each institute will bring value for value, and all the teachers will be more interested.²⁶

Public Relations

The Association was, from the first, mindful of the importance of good public relations to the cause of public-school education. The organization submitted for newspaper publication its call for delegates to attend the first convention at New Iberia.²⁷ During the period preceding adoption of the Louisiana Constitution of 1898, the Association remained alert to the advantages of general press publicity, and softened uncompromising attitudes toward early basic principles in order to cultivate a friendly press. Still conscious of itself as an organization designed exclusively for professional teachers in public schools, the Association took a formal vote, and failed to reach unanimity, when it grudgingly admitted Warren Easton,

²⁶"The Reading Circle," Louisiana School Review, III (January, 1898), 6.

²⁷News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], March 26, 1893.

superintendent of New Orleans schools, as a member in 1893.²⁸ At Baton Rouge in 1895, Easton served notice that he would offer an amendment to the Constitution of the Association "to permit all teachers, superintendents, members of school boards, and friends of education to become members of this association."²⁹ His proposal was considered at the convention in Lake Charles in 1896, and, reported the Louisiana School Review, the "matter was finally brought to an end by a motion to table the amendment, which on roll call was tabled by a vote of 85 to 54."³⁰ The attitude of exclusiveness did not prevent the Association from making an honorary member of H. H. Hargrove, whose publicity work for public-school education as representative of The Daily Picayune was appreciated.³¹ At the

²⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 28, 1893.

²⁹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 31, 1895.

³⁰News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 30, 1896.

³¹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 28, 1893.

convention in Baton Rouge in 1895, when the matter of press relations was considered, R. G. Ferguson of New Iberia voiced the consensus when he said: "What education wants and needs is the intelligent cooperation of the press to prepare the minds of the people for the new gospel on education."³² By 1898, local associations of teachers in some parishes were conducting educational columns in community newspapers. "The Parish Teachers' Association of Iberville has an admirably conducted educational column in the Iberville South," reported the Louisiana School Review. "Supt. Calvin Schwing and his parish teachers form the editorial corps [for the column]."³³

School Journal

The Association acted quickly to establish an educational journal to serve as its official organ. On December 28, 1894, the organization, meeting at Monroe in its second convention, "resolved itself into a committee of the whole" to consider organization of a stock company "to

³²News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], January 1, 1896.

³³"News Notes and Personals," Louisiana School Review, III (February, 1898), 10.

operate a school journal."³⁴ The Louisiana School Review was born the following day. The Daily Picayune gave this account of the event:

A number of the teachers met this morning and organized a \$5,000 stock company, limited, to secure a charter and organize a school journal. The following board of managers was created to organize the work, locate its domicile, and secure business for the new journal: T. Boyd, president; Warren Easton, C. E. Ives, G. D. [P]ickles [sic] and H. H. Hargrove.

Henry E. Chambers, Monroe school principal, was the first editor of the Louisiana School Review. The 1895 convention at Baton Rouge adopted a resolution commending Chambers and his associates for their work. The resolution said:

Resolved that we recognize in the Louisiana School Review an educational paper of great merit and a potent factor in our cause of educating the masses, and that Prof. H. E. Chambers and the other editors be given our thanks for the able manner in which they have edited the Review.³⁶

The journal, although it adopted more than one name

³⁴News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 29, 1894.

³⁵News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 30, 1894.

³⁶News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], January 1, 1896.

and went through many changes of management, continued to serve as the Association's official organ until the Association was reorganized with a permanent staff and headquarters in 1922.

Curriculum Study

Interest in improvement of the public-school curriculum made itself apparent, too, in the Association before adoption of the State Constitution of 1898. The belief was evidently held among the Association's leaders that improvement of the curriculum was one of the matters included in its originally stated aim to "promote the interest of education in Louisiana."³⁷ In 1896, the Executive Committee of the Association "made the course of study in all grades of public schools the topic for the discussions and papers at the December session of that body."³⁸ The Association's 1895 convention was "in the nature of a symposium of the Louisiana public school

³⁷News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], March 26, 1893.

³⁸"News Notes and Personals," Louisiana School Review, II (September, 1896), 7.

system--its condition and needs and outlook,"³⁹ and in 1896 at Lake Charles, R. L. Himes, as president, appointed a Committee on Curriculum. The account of this action in The Daily Picayune said:

Chairman Himes announced the following as the committee on curriculum: T. D. Boyd, chairman; Miss Marian Brown, of New Orleans; Miss Handy, of Monroe; Miss Irwin, of Lecompte; George Williamson, J. E. Keeney [sic], A. T. Prescott, J. H. Dillard, and the association added Mr. Himes to the committee.⁴⁰

The group was "to prepare a course of study for the public schools of the state leading up to the university."⁴¹ The group was asked to have its report ready for the 1897 convention in New Orleans, but a yellow fever epidemic which hit the southern parishes in the fall of 1897 and, by November 1, caused 183 deaths in the city of New Orleans alone,⁴² forced cancellation of the meeting. The Association did not convene again until after the Constitutional

³⁹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], January 1, 1896.

⁴⁰News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 31, 1896.

⁴¹"The Lake Charles Convention," Louisiana School Review, II (January, 1897), 7.

⁴²News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], November 1, 1897.

Convention of 1898.

IV. CONSTITUTION OF 1898

Carr has pointed to evidence that state associations of teachers have become very effective agencies in influencing legislation. Citing a study made to determine the relative strengths of various lobbies in California, New York, Ohio, and Tennessee, he noted that personal interviews with 84 per cent of legislators of the four states were used as a part of the research. "In their opinion, said Carr, "the most powerful group in each state was the state education association."⁴³ Consciousness of the feasibility of such a role for their Association in influencing legal provisions for education was present among early leaders of the new organization of Louisiana teachers. The Association became one of the forces pushing for educational progress through provisions of the proposed new Constitution. The frame of mind desired among Association members was voiced in the Louisiana School Review prior to the Constitutional Convention, which met in

⁴³William G. Carr, "The Assault on Professional Independence," Phi Delta Kappan, XLVI (September, 1964), 18.

New Orleans on February 8, 1898.⁴⁴ The statement of the journal's writer declared:

If teachers want to raise their occupation to a profession, they must often come together; they must organize themselves into Parish, State, and National Associations, and at their meetings not merely make elaborate speeches and read beautiful essays, but deliberate in a plain, matter-of-fact way how longer terms and higher salaries are to be effected, how the money is to be raised, and how the schools can be freed from bondage.⁴⁵

Improvement of Supervision

The realization of need for improved local supervision in public-school education in Louisiana was of long standing. The Louisiana Journal of Education, commenting hopefully on the Constitution of 1879, said: "There are to be Parish Superintendents, which is a wise provision, and may greatly aid in the general efficiency of the State system."⁴⁶ In 1891, Hargrove, an influential publicist,

⁴⁴Alcée Fortier, A History of Louisiana (New York: Manzi, Joyant and Company, 1904), IV, 233.

⁴⁵"The Chautauqua-Column," Louisiana School Review, III (January, 1898), 10.

⁴⁶"The Public Schools of New Orleans," Louisiana Journal of Education, I (December, 1879), 197-98.

and himself a parish superintendent,⁴⁷ expressed widespread dissatisfaction with the system of parish school supervision established by the Constitution of 1879. He said:

The true need is [a professional superintendent for each parish] as upon that official's advent all other needs will rapidly and readily disappear. He induces the public and the patrons to supply these other needs. In this article it is not the purpose to strike at my brother superintendents of Louisiana, for I am no better than they are, but to point out the needs of trained and well remunerated professional superintendents who are to do no other work, to be paid to study and do this work as a lawyer, a doctor or any other trained professional man would do their professional work, as a source of living and with a love for the work.⁴⁸

Through its journal, the new organization of Louisiana teachers backed the campaign for constitutional provision of better supervision. A year before the Constitutional Convention met, the Louisiana School Review commented: "The greatest single reform to be sought from the constitutional convention is competent supervision of the country schools."⁴⁹ It urged its readers: ". . . when

⁴⁷H. H. Hargrove, "Louisiana's First Need," Louisiana Educator, I (June, 1891), 3.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Editorial, Louisiana School Review, II (January, 1896), 3.

discussing the new constitution don't forget to plead for better salaries for the superintendents."⁵⁰

Increased Revenue

The Association looked to the new Constitution to provide additional tax support for public education. In addition to improvement in supervision, it listed two other "things of first importance" in the constitutional deliberations of 1898. These were increased State revenues for school purposes, and the "privilege of local taxation for building schoolhouses."⁵¹ Through its journal the Association backed a movement to elect friends of education to the convention by giving publicity to a resolution adopted by parish superintendents in their convention in New Orleans in 1897. The resolution led to appointment of a nine-member committee which should

. . . fix its own quorum and . . . perform the duties of a campaign committee looking to the election of delegates to the constitutional convention, who are favorable to the public school system, and who will endeavor by their positions as members of the said

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Editorial, Louisiana School Review, III (February, 1898), 4.

convention to promote and improve the school system of the state through the instrumentality of the organic law.⁵²

After reviewing the handicaps under which public-school education in Louisiana labored, and urging friends of education to bring their influence to bear in establishing a favorable atmosphere for education in the Constitutional Convention, the voice of the Association warned: ". . . if these misfortunes are to continue with no certain remedy, it will be by grace of . . . teachers and school officers and patrons . . . of schools."⁵³ That all that had been hoped for was not attained was indicated by the biennial report of State Superintendent of Public Education J. V. Calhoun for 1896-97, published in 1898,⁵⁴ but the Association and allied agencies felt that their preconvention efforts had not been entirely in vain. The Constitution of 1898, which went into effect on January 1,

⁵²"The Constitutional Convention," Louisiana School Review, III (September, 1897), 14.

⁵³Editorial, Louisiana School Review, III (January, 1898), 4.

⁵⁴Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education to the General Assembly, 1896-97 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: The Advocate, Official Journal of the State of Louisiana, 1898), pp. 23-24.

1899, cleared the way for improved supervision at the State level,⁵⁵ and for employment of professional educators as full-time parish superintendents.⁵⁶ It opened the door to local taxation for financing school construction,⁵⁷ and for the support of education generally.⁵⁸ The State support for public schools was set at not "less than one and one quarter mills of the six mills tax levied and collected by the State."⁵⁹

VI. GROWING EDUCATIONAL ENTHUSIASM, 1898-1908

The decade between adoption of the Constitution of 1898 and the resignation of J. B. Aswell as State Superintendent of Public Education in 1908, after he had been elected without opposition for a second term, saw

⁵⁵Constitution of the State of Louisiana, 1898,
Article 249, p. 98.

⁵⁶Constitution of the State of Louisiana, 1898,
Article 250, p. 98.

⁵⁷Constitution of the State of Louisiana, 1898,
Article 232, pp. 91-92.

⁵⁸Constitution of the State of Louisiana, 1898,
Article 254, pp. 98-99.

⁵⁹Ibid.

educational enthusiasm in Louisiana climb toward a peak. Sentiment for public schools had begun to rise in the State much earlier, given impetus by the lecture tours of A. R. Horne and A. D. Mayo, mentioned in an earlier chapter, and by the popular institute appearances of Martin G. Brumbaugh, Pennsylvania educator and orator, and B. C. Caldwell, institute lecturer from Missouri. Brumbaugh and Caldwell, according to L. J. Alleman, president of the Association in 1908, were proteges, in the late 1880's, of Thomas D. Boyd, the president of Louisiana State Normal College at Natchitoches.⁶⁰ These out-of-State personalities helped set the stage for Aswell, a native son whose popularity as a public speaker was comparable in Louisiana to that of William Jennings Bryan. Harris credited Aswell with rallying public opinion massively to the cause of tax-supported schools, declaring that this was "a service no other man in the State at the time could have rendered."⁶¹

⁶⁰News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 10, 1908.

⁶¹Harris, op. cit., p. 111.

Legislation for Education

The quality of Aswell's rhetoric may be judged from excerpts taken from two addresses delivered before conventions of the Association. Both speeches were intended to spur legislative action to bring greater financial support to the public schools. As president of the Association in 1901, he delivered an address at Franklin from which this quotation is taken:

Referring to the distribution of the state's funds during the recent session of the legislature, a prominent gentleman said that the schools are a menace to the country's treasury; that they are taking more and more of its money needed elsewhere, and that the teachers are the spirits directing the movement, and that they are they whom the guardians of the treasury must meet in the future. If that gentleman meant that the schools will check the tendency to imperialism, if he meant that the schools are dangerous to all forms of monarchy and tyranny, if he meant that the schools are to lessen the need of jails and penitentiaries, thus destroying many remunerative offices and diverting from that center the flowing of many millions; if he meant that the schools will be destructive to the widespread anarchism of the country, there is much truth in this statement. If he meant that the teachers are the spirit fatal to the "divine right of kings," whether in the civic, the social, the religious or the commercial world; if he meant that the teachers are the spirits arrayed against any form of illiteracy, monopoly or oppression that prevents the fullest liberty of mind and hand, his statement is sound. If he meant that this government is in danger of yielding more and more readily to the legitimate and intelligent organized demand of the teachers, appropriating large sums each year to meet the growing demands of educational conditions, then his accurate statement of an intricate

problem and his prophetic insight stamp him a man in whom there is no untruth.⁶²

In 1905, speaking about teachers' salaries at the Association's April convention at Alexandria, Aswell declared:

. . . The purpose of this discussion is not to offer a panacea for all the evils of the schools, but it is to state some facts, and hope for thoughtful consideration. The test of the school is made when the teacher faces his class and his community. The teachers must take the initiative, if the people are to be quickened into vital concern for the welfare of all our schools. Suggest a schoolhouse, and wise men tell us that the important thing is the teacher's salary. Suggest a salary tax and other wise men tell us the first thing is the schoolhouse. Suggest a State tax and other wise men tell us that it should be a local tax. Suggest a local tax and other wise men tell us it should be a State tax.⁶³

By means of publicity given in its own journal, and in the regular newspapers of the State, to speeches such as these made to conventions by Aswell and others, and by adoption of resolutions which seemed to express a solidarity of professional attitude toward matters concerning public-school education, the Association sought to influence

⁶²News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 27, 1901.

⁶³J. B. Aswell, "The Teacher's Salary," Louisiana School Review, XII (May, 1905), 7-8.

legislation.

An editorial in the Louisiana School Review in 1899 expressed the feeling of leaders of the Association when it declared that "it is about time something be done . . . that will convince the unbelieving that the association is a factor in legislation for betterment of schools."⁶⁴ At its convention in Franklin in 1901, the Association instructed its Legislative Committee to cooperate with a committee appointed by school superintendents of the State to work for realization of their resolution that "the legislature enact a law setting aside 2 mills from the state taxes for the support and maintenance of the public schools."⁶⁵ In Ruston in 1903, the Association voted to "defray the necessary expenses of the legislative committee while looking after the work of the association," and passed a resolution "requesting the Legislature to change the school year so as to make it begin the first of

⁶⁴Editorial, Louisiana School Review, VI (November, 1899), 20.

⁶⁵News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 28, 1901.

September instead of January as now."⁶⁶ The Association was undaunted by the failure of Louisiana voters to pass in November, 1904, a proposed million-dollar bond issue to finance school construction throughout the State. The Lafayette convention of 1904 strongly endorsed local taxation as the "wisest and safest solution of the question of greater revenues for the support of schools," and pledged the Association to work for "increased assessment of all underassessed property."⁶⁷ Confidence in their ability by concerted action to affect the course of the future of education led members of the Association to vote to hold two conventions in less than six months, after deciding to change the season of their annual conventions from December to spring. In December, 1904, at Lafayette, the Association heard State Superintendent Aswell insist "that while enthusiasm for better education in Louisiana was at high tide, it was advisable to hold another Convention this spring," and voted to meet again at Alexandria in

⁶⁶"State Association," Louisiana School Review, XI (January, 1904), 147.

⁶⁷News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 30, 1904.

April, 1905.⁶⁸ The 1906 meeting was held in Baton Rouge because Aswell wanted the teachers' Association in convention at the capital city while the Legislature was in session.⁶⁹ That Louisiana teachers and friends of education responded enthusiastically to Aswell's call was indicated by a newspaper description of the crowd which gathered to hear the addresses scheduled for the first evening session of the convention in Baton Rouge, April 19, 1906:

So large was the attendance tonight that Garig Hall . . . which seats twelve hundred people, was unable to begin to hold the crowds, and the regular meeting was held in the University Pavilion, which it is estimated could accommodate seventeen hundred people, but so great was the attendance that it was necessary to hold an overflow meeting at Garig Hall, where five hundred people were gathered. Over two thousand people, all teachers or the friends of education, turned out to hear the addresses of the evening. The audience that gathered in the pavilion was the largest that was ever assembled in the city, surpassing the big Bryan meeting six years ago.⁷⁰

On the last day of the 1906 convention, the

⁶⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 29, 1904.

⁶⁹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 7, 1905.

⁷⁰News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 20, 1906.

Association adopted resolutions calling for a compulsory-education law and for legal action to facilitate creation of funds for financial relief of retired teachers. It also endorsed recommendations "contained in the biennial report of Superintendent Aswell."⁷¹ In addition to passage of various laws to increase and make more efficient State financial support of public institutions of learning and to encourage establishment of high schools and school libraries, Aswell's report recommended special recognition of graduates of State institutions in certification procedures, legislation more explicitly defining duties and qualifications of parish superintendents, and a law providing for election of school board members at large and for overlapping terms.⁷²

The influence of Aswell on legislative recommendations of the Association was strongly evident in newspaper accounts of conventions held during his

⁷¹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 22, 1906.

⁷²Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education to the General Assembly, 1904-05 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: The Times, Official Journal of Louisiana, 1905), pp. xvi and xviii.

administration as State Superintendent. At the 1907 convention in Shreveport, the Association endorsed a plan to "have the school boards consist of nine members elected at large, the time of three to expire every two years, making the boards continuous." The plan was outlined the day before "by Superintendent Aswell in his talk . . . before the School Board Association." The endorsement was nearly unanimous, despite a move to strike the words "at large."⁷³ In a resolution adopted at the convention in New Orleans in 1908--the last convention attended by Aswell as State Superintendent of Public Education--the Association more or less summed up recommendations made in the organization's meetings held during Aswell's administration. The resolution said:

. . . it is the sense of this Association that the next General Assembly be requested to enact legislation making effective the following:

(a)--Two mills of the State tax to be appropriated for the support of the Public Schools.

(b)--Authorizing compulsory school attendance in cities and parishes where the majority of the electors so determine.

(c)--Laws requiring and defining the professional

⁷³News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 7, 1907.

and scholastic qualifications of Parish Superintendents.

(d)--A change in plan of electing School Boards so that each Parish School Board shall consist of nine members. . . .⁷⁴

The resolution continued with a detailed plan for election of school-board members at staggered intervals to insure continuity of educational policy-making at the parish level.

A measure of the Association's high opinion of Aswell was contained in another resolution adopted at the 1908 convention. The resolution said:

This marked progress [in public education in Louisiana] is due very largely to the ability, zeal and untiring devotion of the State Superintendent of Education, and believing that such services should receive recognition in keeping with their worth to the people and children of the State, we urgently request that necessary steps be taken to increase the salary of said officer to an amount equal to that paid in other States for similar services.⁷⁵

Curriculum Improvement

Improvement of the public-school curriculum and its adjustment to special Louisiana needs drew the attention of

⁷⁴News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 12, 1908.

⁷⁵Ibid.

the Association at the New Orleans convention of 1898. A committee, headed by Thomas D. Boyd, was appointed to "cooperate with the state board of education for . . . bringing about a satisfactory articulation between the courses of study of the public schools and the higher institutions."⁷⁶ Concern about the curriculum was much broader, of course, than this effort to improve the college-preparatory role of the public schools indicated. Closely related was the public high school, which was just beginning to make its appearance on the public-school scene in Louisiana outside the city of New Orleans, and which needed encouragement and realistic charts to steer by. Before the 1898-1908 decade had ended the rural school had become a special concern of Louisiana educators, and the advantages provided by school consolidation in the form of expanded curricula and enlarged faculties were receiving much consideration.

The committee named by the Association in 1896 to prepare a course of study for the public schools in Louisiana carried out its assignment with deliberation,

⁷⁶"Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Convention," loc. cit.

completing its work in 1899. The committee's curriculum recommendations, outlined in detail in the Louisiana School Review,⁷⁷ led to debate at the Shreveport convention, but were adopted without a dissenting vote.⁷⁸ Courses were specified for all eleven public-school grades. Each course for each class was subdivided under subject-matter headings. In 1901, the Association adopted a resolution to request the State Superintendent to have reprinted the course of study recommended in 1899. The resolution recommended that the "attention of . . . high-school teachers be specifically called to this course, and that they be urged to develop their work along the lines prescribed for it."⁷⁹

Prior to the convention of 1903, the Executive Committee of the Association decided to make "consolidation of schools" the "general subject for all general sessions" at the forthcoming meeting at Ruston.⁸⁰ The principal

⁷⁷"Course of Study for Louisiana Schools," Louisiana School Review, VII (January, 1900), 25-28.

⁷⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 29, 1899.

⁷⁹"Louisiana S. P. S. T. Association," Louisiana School Review, IX (February, 1902), 31.

⁸⁰"Louisiana State Public School Teachers Association," Louisiana School Review, XI (September, 1903), 31.

speaker on the convention's first evening program was Wickliffe Rose, of the University of Tennessee, whose subject was "Consolidation of Rural Schools."⁸¹ The problem of improving Louisiana's rural schools again drew attention at Lafayette in 1904. Superintendent Aswell told the convention that he believed "the time is soon coming when the condition of the rural school will be what it should be."⁸² In an address, E. B. Craighead, of Tulane University, said: "The most important work we have before us is the improvement of our country schools."⁸³ Discussion of consolidation continued and, on the final day, the convention heard L. J. Alleman describe "the results which had been attained in Lafayette Parish, where schools had been consolidated and the parish board supplies transportation to the pupils."⁸⁴ A special section devoted to

⁸¹"State Association," op. cit., p. 146.

⁸²News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 29, 1904.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 30, 1904.

rural schools was organized by the Association, and at New Orleans in 1908 this section heard J. E. Keeny, president of Louisiana Industrial Institute at Ruston, strongly advocate modification of the curriculum in rural schools to help meet special educational needs.⁸⁵ In 1904, in an address to the convention at Lafayette, Superintendent John Marks, of Assumption Parish, voiced a growing realization among Louisiana educators that a system of good roads was essential to a successful program of consolidation of rural schools.⁸⁶ Louisiana teachers were among the first to propose a "good roads" program.

Local Associations

The years between 1893 and 1908 were years of growing concern for improving the quality of teaching in the public schools. The decade also was marked by increasing attention to the need for bettering the economic position of the teacher. Local associations had

⁸⁵News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 11, 1908.

⁸⁶"Proceedings of the State Teachers' Association," Louisiana School Review, XII (January, 1905), 4.

their parts to play in helping to satisfy these requirements. They aided also in various ways to make more healthful the climate of public opinion in which Louisiana's public schools were evolving.

State school authorities continued to regard parish associations as ideal agencies with which to implement the continuing program of teacher institutes. Edwin F. Gayle, a member of many institute faculties during that period, remembered institute participation as the predominant activity of most parish teachers' organizations.⁸⁷ The word association became almost synonymous with institute in some areas. In these localities, the parish association had no other purpose than to serve as a kind of organizational machinery established for receiving and carrying out the State's program of localized in-service training. Superintendent Aswell, in his biennial report for the 1906-07 period to the Governor and the Legislature, advised: "We earnestly recommend the formation of a teachers'

⁸⁷ Interview with Edwin F. Gayle, December 28, 1966.

association in every parish."⁸⁸ His recommendation seems to have been heeded, for the number of parish associations increased from forty-two in the 1905-06 session to fifty-one in the school term of 1906-07.⁸⁹ In 1906, the Louisiana School Review noted that the "State Department has recently issued official pamphlets upon the Parish Teachers' Association, giving outlines for the monthly meetings."⁹⁰ The local institute programs were an integral part of the State's plan for upgrading teacher competency, a plan which also included one-week institutes, conducted when schools were not in session, and four-week and six-week summer schools.⁹¹ Program outlines to be used by parish associations were issued by the State Institute Board, and were closely adhered to by local school authorities. A notice published in the Louisiana School Review to

⁸⁸Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education to the Governor and to the General Assembly, 1906-1907 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: The Daily State Publishing Company, State Printers, 1908), p. 8.

⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 8 and 14.

⁹⁰"News Notes," Louisiana School Review, XIV (September, 1906), 26.

⁹¹L. J. Alleman, "A Brief History of the Teachers' Institute in Louisiana," Louisiana School Review, XVI (December, 1908), 29-30.

the effect that at a meeting of the Vernon Parish Teachers' Association in 1905 the "regular program was carried out as outlined by the State Department" was representative of many such notices which appeared in the pages of the Association's journal during those years.⁹²

Parish associations had other important functions to perform during the decade that ushered in the twentieth century. Avoyelles Parish teachers developed an association which was particularly versatile in interest and activity.

The Louisiana School Review remarked:

They do three things that distinguish them from nearly all similar associations: they meet in a different place every time, thus going over all the parish; they are entertained free of charge by the people of the community in which they meet, and they continue their meetings through two days, holding an attractive public night session. Supt. [V. L.] Roy is "at the bottom of it."⁹³

In this comment, there was clear indication that Superintendent Roy was using the parish teachers' association to carry the public-school message to the people, and that the citizens of Avoyelles Parish were responding with

⁹²"Notes and Personals," Louisiana School Review, XII (May, 1905), 22.

⁹³"News Notes and Personals," Louisiana School Review, XIII (November, 1905), 24-25.

a willingness to make meetings of the parish association occasions of social experience with the teaching personnel of their school system. In March, 1906, a large number of the lay citizens of Moreauville attended every session of the two-day meeting. Three years earlier--a year before Roy became parish superintendent--Moreauville had "no public school building, one teacher and twenty-four pupils."⁹⁴ When the Avoyelles Parish Teachers' Association met there in 1906, the community had "a handsome, comfortable and well equipped [sic] school building with four teachers and one hundred and ninety-four pupils."⁹⁵ The itinerant teachers' association played its part in arousing public opinion in support of an improved school program. Avoyelles Parish was outstanding in this area of association activity, but it was by no means the only parish having a teachers' association engaged in helping to popularize public-school education. Other parishes singled out by the Louisiana School Review for commendation were West Baton Rouge Parish, Tangipahoa Parish,

⁹⁴"News Notes from Avoyelles," Louisiana School Review, XIII (April, 1906), 183.

⁹⁵Ibid.

St. Landry Parish, and Washington Parish.

The parish associations also sponsored social activities for their members, entirely without benefit of lay cooperation. Groups of teachers from Lincoln Parish and Union Parish "met at D'Arbone [sic] on the line between the two parishes on Nov. 24 and had an educational rally and a Thanksgiving feast."⁹⁶ Members of the Winn Parish Teachers' Association planned to make a leisurely river voyage of their trip to the convention of the Association at Baton Rouge in 1906. They were to adjourn an April 17 meeting "to start on the trip to Baton Rouge together Wednesday morning by way of Monroe and by boat down the Ouachita river."⁹⁷ The New Orleans teachers had a similar idea that spring. An item in the Association's journal declared: "The New Orleans teachers are planning to charter a steamboat for the round trip, on which they will have their board and lodging during the entire time of the

⁹⁶"Notes and Personals," Louisiana School Review, XII (December, 1904), 19.

⁹⁷"News Notes," Louisiana School Review, XIII (April, 1906), 180.

convention."⁹⁸ When the Tangipahoa Parish Teachers' Association met at Kentwood in March, 1906, the teachers were "royally entertained by Professor Johnson and faculty. In the afternoon . . . the Association took a ride of thirty-five miles out into Washington Parish on the K and E Railroad."⁹⁹

Parish associations established professional libraries for themselves in this decade of intensified interest in professional competence. The Rapides Parish Teachers' Association had started its library by 1902.¹⁰⁰ The Lafayette teachers decided in 1904 to lend personal books to make the nucleus of a professional library.¹⁰¹ In 1906, the Avoyelles association voted to invest a treasury surplus of fifty-five dollars in books for a professional library and the Avoyelles Parish School Board cooperated by

⁹⁸"For Baton Rouge in April," Louisiana School Review, XIII (January, 1906), 70.

⁹⁹"News Notes from Tangipahoa Parish," Louisiana School Review, XIII (April, 1906), 183.

¹⁰⁰"Rapides Parish Notes," Louisiana School Review, IX (April, 1902), 27.

¹⁰¹"State News," Louisiana School Review, XI (May, 1904), 281.

matching the amount of the teachers' investment.¹⁰²

Teacher Welfare

Improvement of the teachers' economic position and job security was not forgotten during the decade which ended with Aswell's resignation in 1908. An editorial in the Louisiana School Review in 1905 may have summed up the thinking of educational leadership with reference to these matters. The editorial stated:

As soon as the charlatans and fakes and incompetent, unqualified temporary teachers are gotten rid of by means of strict examinations and competition with expert, skilled teachers, it will be time to move for civil service protection against unreasonable dismissal from a position, to insist on some guarantee of continuous employment and to work for a graduated increase of salaries, and for an old age pension.¹⁰³

All were not willing, however, to wait for the weeding out of incompetents from the profession before moving to improve the welfare of public-school teachers. At the Baton Rouge convention of 1906, the Association, after hearing Warren Easton urge endorsement of a "movement by

¹⁰²"News Notes from Avoyelles," Louisiana School Review, XIV (December, 1906), 142.

¹⁰³Editorial, Louisiana School Review, XII (June, 1905), 16.

which the Parish School Board may have the right to create a retirement fund out of the funds appropriated to the parish," adopted a resolution to "recommend the creation of a superannuated fund."¹⁰⁴ In January, 1906, an attempt was made in Lafayette Parish under the leadership of N. P. Moss, president of the parish school board, to create a teachers' pension fund and to join with other groups "in forming a similar movement to establish a State Teachers' Pension Fund."¹⁰⁵ The New Orleans Teachers' Pension League laid plans for a "grand entertainment in Washington Artillery Hall, November 28 to December 1," in hope of raising \$20,000 to start a general pension fund.¹⁰⁶ These movements were not immediately successful, but they helped keep attention focused on matters which, years later, were to receive a great deal of consideration from the State teachers' Association.

¹⁰⁴ News items in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 20 and 22, 1906.

¹⁰⁵ "Teachers Institutes," Louisiana School Review, XIII (January, 1906), 87.

¹⁰⁶ "The News Budget from New Orleans," Louisiana School Review, XIV (September, 1906), 30.

Cooperation with Other Agencies

As pointed out in Chapter I, State conventions of educational personnel were employed by duly constituted educational authorities in efforts to arouse professional and lay interest in Louisiana public-school education even before the War between the States. Superintendent Aswell's insistence that the Association meet in convention in April, 1905, rather than wait until April, 1906, to begin convening in the spring, was evidence of the value placed on these conventions by elected officials early in the twentieth century. Adoption of resolutions in support of State Superintendents of Public Education and of their latest proposals for improvement in school arrangements became almost a traditional part of programs of final-day convention sessions. The State Superintendents and other State educational authorities seemed to value the assistance rendered by the Association. The Association's journal, for example, came in for some high-level commendation in 1899. State Superintendent J. V. Calhoun wrote to J. E. Keeny, editor of the Louisiana School Review:

I have read the issues of your school paper with much pleasure, and consider it a most useful factor in the good work of the public schools in the state. I heartily recommend it to the patronage of our school

officials, teachers, and patrons, and give it the sanction of our official approval; and shall, if you permit, use it as a medium of official announcements to be made from time to time in the discharge of the duties of my department. In this way, we shall be brought to notice of many of our school people, by whom we might be otherwise entirely overlooked.¹⁰⁷

And the Louisiana State Board of Education, at a meeting held at Baton Rouge on August 11, 1903, adopted a resolution which said:

Resolved. That the State Board of Education regards the Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association as a valuable means of improvement of the public teachers of the State and regrets to learn that only a small per cent of our corps of teachers are on the rolls; therefore, the State Board advises the parish superintendents to use their efforts to secure a large attendance of their teachers at the annual meeting of the State Teachers' Association.¹⁰⁸

Leaders of the Association took an increasingly active interest in the affairs of the National Education Association during this decade of growing educational enthusiasm, and received increasing recognition from the national organization. At Alexandria, in 1900, the State teachers' Association endorsed the position taken by the

¹⁰⁷"Department of School Supervision," Louisiana School Review, VI (November, 1899), 18.

¹⁰⁸"La. S. P. S. Teachers Association," Louisiana School Review, XI (November, 1903), 87.

National Education Association with reference to the office of the United States Commissioner of Education, formally declaring that it urged Congress to consider "the wisdom and advisability of reorganizing the bureau of education on broader lines, making it an independent department on a plane with the department of labor."¹⁰⁹

Official headquarters were established for Louisiana teachers at the Minneapolis convention of the National Education Association in 1902.¹¹⁰ In 1906, a delegation of eighteen Louisiana educators was in attendance at the meeting of the Department of Superintendence at Louisville, Kentucky, February 27 and 28, and March 1.¹¹¹ At the Chicago assembly of the Department of Superintendence, February 26, 27 and 28, 1907, J. B. Aswell launched the convention program with an address entitled: "Is the Child the Ward of the Nation?"¹¹² At the same convention,

¹⁰⁹ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 28, 1900.

¹¹⁰ "New Orleans Items," Louisiana School Review, IX (May, 1902), 31.

¹¹¹ "Department of Superintendence," Louisiana School Review, XIII (March, 1906), 135-36.

¹¹² NEA, Proceedings, 1907, pp. 152-57.

George W. Reid, superintendent of Monroe city schools, read a paper entitled "The Relation of the Physical Nature of the Child to His Mental and Moral Development" to the Round Table of Superintendents of Medium and Smaller Cities.¹¹³ In 1908 at Washington, Aswell presided at the Round Table of State and County Superintendents, which had "County Supervision" as the topic of discussion.¹¹⁴

During those years the Association of Louisiana teachers held two of its conventions in conjunction with educational organizations having wider fields of interest. During the weeks following Christmas in 1898, the Louisiana organization and the Southern Educational Association convened in New Orleans.¹¹⁵ In April, 1908, the International Kindergarten Union held its convention a week before the organization of Louisiana teachers convened, also in New Orleans.¹¹⁶ Louisiana teachers during this period

¹¹³ Ibid., pp. 305-07.

¹¹⁴ NEA, Proceedings, 1908, p. 134.

¹¹⁵ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 28, 1898.

¹¹⁶ News items in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 1, 2, and 3, 1908.

demonstrated their willingness to combine forces with Louisiana parents' groups in working for educational improvement. At Baton Rouge in 1902,¹¹⁷ and at Ruston in 1903,¹¹⁸ their Association directed a special committee to work with the Louisiana State Federation of Women's Clubs in matters concerning the welfare of the public schools. In 1907 at Shreveport, the Association unanimously accepted an invitation to cooperate with the Louisiana State Congress of Mothers in acting for the cause of education in Louisiana.¹¹⁹

Organizational Developments

A development foreshadowing the Association's reorganization twenty years later occurred at the convention in Baton Rouge in 1902. By adopting a constitutional amendment, the Association provided for employment of a paid secretary. The amendment decreed:

The Recording Secretary shall be elected for three

¹¹⁷ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], January 1, 1903.

¹¹⁸ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 31, 1903.

¹¹⁹ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 7, 1907.

years. He shall be Ex-officio Secretary of the Executive Committee. . . . He shall prepare and distribute all the bulletins and information which this Association shall wish to place before its members. He shall attend to its railroad arrangements for all meetings. He shall receive as a compensation \$50 per annum.¹²⁰

Nicholas Bauer was named the Association's first paid secretary. His annual compensation was increased to \$150 at the Alexandria convention in 1905.¹²¹ Bauer served as secretary until 1913, when he resigned to accept the presidency of the Association.¹²² He was succeeded by L. J. Alleman, who still held the post when the Association moved for reorganization at its convention in New Orleans in 1922.¹²³

Another organizational development was a change in the season of the year in which conventions of the Association were held. The period of the Christmas holidays

¹²⁰ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], January 1, 1903.

¹²¹ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 7, 1905.

¹²² News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 18, 1913.

¹²³ News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 6, 1922.

probably was adhered to for more than a decade as the regular time of convening because it was believed that the teachers would find it difficult to get time off to attend conventions when classes normally were in session. This feeling was suggested, at least, in the proceedings of the Lafayette convention of 1904 when the Association voted to hold subsequent meetings in April instead of in December. The Association voted for the change only after hearing J. E. Keeny report "that the recent Superintendents' Convention had declared strongly in favor of having the Association's meeting in the spring."¹²⁴ April remained the convention month until 1922.

The early feeling that the Association should enroll only individuals qualifying for membership under a strict interpretation of the organization's title gradually began to weaken. When C. A. Ives, at the Franklin convention of 1901, declared that he was in favor of opening the membership rolls to all teachers of the State regardless of whether they taught in public or private schools, he met strong opposition, and his proposal to change the

¹²⁴"Proceedings of the State Teachers' Association," op. cit., p. 2.

organization's name to "Louisiana Teachers' Association" was tabled.¹²⁵ But the following year at Baton Rouge the Association admitted kindergarten teachers, who were not included in the State's public-school system, and instructed the Executive Committee to make a place on the convention program for a Kindergarten Department.¹²⁶ In a newly adopted Constitution of the Association published in the Louisiana School Review in 1903, "State and Parish Officers and Private School Teachers and such other individuals as the Association may elect" were recognized as honorary members having "all the privileges of active members except the right to vote."¹²⁷ At Shreveport in 1907 the Association adopted a resolution which declared: "We welcome the association of the School Boards and Superintendents to our membership, recognizing in them a mighty

¹²⁵ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], December 28, 1901.

¹²⁶ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], January 1, 1903.

¹²⁷ "Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisiana State Public School Teachers Association," Louisiana School Review, XI (December, 1903), 120.

addition to the organization of public school forces."¹²⁸
The original attitude of exclusiveness was to soften even more later on.

The decade of 1898-1908 was a period of vigorous growth in the membership of the Association. This growth was reflected in Secretary Bauer's report to the Shreveport convention in 1907. He listed the number of members at each convention time from 1901 to 1906: 1901, Franklin, 153; 1902, Baton Rouge, 236; 1903, Ruston, 378; 1904, Lafayette, 626; 1905, Alexandria, 1,002; 1906, Baton Rouge, 1,173.¹²⁹ At New Orleans in 1908, 1,863 names were on the Association's membership rolls.¹³⁰ The Association's healthy growth and financial stability led Bauer to make two significant recommendations in his report to the Shreveport convention of 1907. He proposed that proceedings of conventions be printed henceforth at the Association's expense instead of being turned over to the State

¹²⁸ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 7, 1907.

¹²⁹ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 5, 1907.

¹³⁰ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 12, 1908.

Department of Education for publication. He recommended also that paid clerks be employed to take care of the job of enrolling members at conventions, a job done previously by an Enrolling Committee.¹³¹ Bauer's recommendations were adopted by the Association.

An unusual development of the decade was the Association's sponsorship of an agency which was called "the League for Literacy." It was first proposed by E. L. Stephens, president of Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute, who declared that the League "would require only ten or fifteen years to reduce the percentage of illiteracy [among adult males] in the State to practical [sic] zero."¹³² At the 1905 convention in Alexandria a "commission on literacy" was appointed with Stephens as chairman.¹³³ His plan entailed voluntary contributions of teaching time and expense money by members of the Association.¹³⁴ Work of the League attracted favorable attention

¹³¹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 5, 1907.

¹³²E. L. Stephens, "The Proposed League for Literacy," Louisiana School Review, XII (January, 1905), 7.

¹³³News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 9, 1905.

¹³⁴Stephens, loc. cit.

and some cooperation for a time. At the 1909 convention, at Stephens's suggestion, the group was dissolved and its work assigned to a newly constituted standing committee called the "Committee on Investigation of School Problems."¹³⁵

After being re-elected for a second term as State Superintendent of Public Education in 1908, J. B. Aswell resigned to accept the presidency of Louisiana State Normal College. T. H. Harris was appointed by Governor J. Y. Sanders to succeed him.¹³⁶ A new period began in the development of the Association.

VII. SUPPORT FOR STRONG EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, 1908-1922

Approximately fifteen years elapsed after the resignation of J. B. Aswell as State Superintendent of Public Education before the Association reorganized and employed a

¹³⁵ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 2, 1909.

¹³⁶ Minns Sledge Robertson, Public Education in Louisiana after 1898 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, College of Education, Louisiana State University, 1952), pp. 42-43.

full-time executive secretary. This period, according to newspaper accounts, and as described by writers for the Association's official journal, was marked most distinctively by consistent backing of the many proposals brought forth at the State level for improvement of public education in Louisiana. The Association had lent support before to State officials, but its earlier history had been more closely concerned with a struggle to stay alive and to preserve identity as an organization of teachers engaged in the work of public education. The Association did not enjoy a fifteen-year period of uninterrupted growth after arrival of the high tide of educational enthusiasm which marked the Aswell administration. Membership actually dwindled at one time. The jealous guarding of the membership rolls did not become a thing of the embattled past. During the period, the Association did not completely relax its insistence that full membership be reserved for teachers engaged in public education. Records of Association activity were full of significant incidents having nothing to do with support of educational planning by State leaders. The outstanding fact about the Association between 1908 and 1922, however, was the supportive role it

played for State educational leadership in close association with the State Department of Education and its head, State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris.

Voice of the State Department

In 1908, soon after Harris's appointment to succeed Aswell, the masthead of the Louisiana School Review notified its readers that the publication had taken on additional responsibilities. It was no longer just the "Official Organ of the Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association." It also was the "Official Organ of the State Department of Education."¹³⁷ The by-line of T. H. Harris soon became one of the most familiar of all to readers of the Association's journal. Harris had many of his letters to parish superintendents and other school officials published in the Louisiana School Review, and in periodicals which succeeded it as official voice of the Association. If there seemed to be doubt in any quarter about official policy of the State Department, Harris used the school journal to help dispel it. An illustration of

¹³⁷Inside front cover, Louisiana School Review, XVI (November, 1908).

this practice appeared in the issue of the Louisiana School Review published in November, 1908, three months after Harris took office. A school principal wrote Harris from Catahoula Parish:

Dear Sir--I am writing to ask if there is any law in the State to compel the attendance of teachers at institute meetings, and to ask your opinion in a special case. . . .

Now as this is the week that takes in the general election day (November 3) such meeting will practically disenfranchise every male teacher who does not vote in the Harrisonburg precinct.

Another thing to be considered is the extreme difficulty in getting to Harrisonburg.

My assistant and I must drive 25 miles to get there and pay livery expenses to the amount of \$6.50 each way, while if it should be rainy or wet we cannot get a carriage at all.

Further there is not a hotel in the town, and one must depend on staying with private families, which, as I have found at least once, it was impossible to do, as all rooms were taken.

Will you kindly advise, therefore, whether or not it is obligatory that we attend this meeting of the institute.¹³⁸

As was his custom, Harris replied by quoting the statutes:

¹³⁸"Official Decisions and Suggestions," Louisiana School Review, XVI (November, 1908), 9-10.

Replying to your letter of the 19th, I beg to refer you to S. 44, A. 167, '04, of the public school laws. You will see by reference to this Act that in case any teachers of your parish should not attend the Week's Institute they will, under the law, forfeit two days' pay and their salary for the week.

I am sorry that conditions there are such as to make it inconvenient for you and your assistant to attend the Institute, but trust that they can be overcome and that you will find it possible to be in attendance and that you will derive great benefit from the Week's Institute.¹³⁹

Harris's ruling in this case seemed to have vanquished any doubts that may have existed in Catahoula Parish about his attitude toward enforcement of the institute law. The Association's journal took notice of institute activity in the parish six years later. It reported:

Catahoula parish recently held a very interesting teacher's institute. The percentage of attendance on the part of the teachers was very large, and the work done was especially good. Some of the teachers traveled almost a hundred miles by boat to reach the meeting [italics not in the original].¹⁴⁰

By the time this notice was printed, the journal of the Association reflected the merging of the organization of Louisiana teachers into a broad educational force

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁴⁰"Educational Notes," Louisiana School Work, III (December, 1914), 73.

compounded of numerous agencies pushing for advancement of the campaign of public education. In its masthead it identified itself simply as "The Official School Journal of the State of Louisiana." The school journal became a means of keeping public-school personnel informed about what was going on in State-level planning. An example of the use of the journal for this purpose was a series of letters written by Harris in 1909 to parish superintendents and school boards. He had the letters printed in the Louisiana School Review so that public-school people as a group might know what was happening. The letters reflected his desire to have school boards agree to pay teachers who attended summer schools five dollars a month more than they would have paid them had they not attended. They expressed his conviction that parish school boards should defray the expenses of superintendents who would attend a meeting in Chicago of the National Education Association's Department of Superintendence. In a letter to superintendents included in this series, Harris wrote:

I am very anxious that favorable action be taken on the summer school proposition before the meeting of the State Teachers' Association at Alexandria; and it is necessary that action be taken on the other, so that

you can arrange to attend the Chicago convention.¹⁴¹

Other officials of the growing State Department of Education were frequent contributors to the Association's journal during those years. Although the influence of State Department thinking was apparent on practically every page of the journal from 1908 to 1922, "official departments" were instituted from time to time by journal editors, adding emphasis to the directive role of the official State organization for public education. On the occasion of such a departmental addition in 1910, the administrative framework of the State Department was formally identified as "T. H. Harris, State Superintendent of Public Instruction," "Leo M. Favrot, State Inspector of High Schools," "C. J. Brown, State Inspector of Elementary Schools," and "L. J. Alleman, State Institute Conductor."¹⁴² Later, subdivisions of the State Department branched out on their own and conducted more specialized journal departments. For instance, in 1916, editors of the Department of Rural

¹⁴¹"Letters to School Officers," Louisiana School Review, XVI (February, 1909), 27.

¹⁴²"Official Department," Louisiana School Review, XVIII (November-December, 1910), 122.

Education in Louisiana School Work were listed as C. J. Brown, John M. Foote, Charles F. Trudeau, and Leo M. Favrot.¹⁴³ All these individuals were important figures working at the time with Harris in the State Department of Education. The masthead of an earlier issue of Louisiana School Work contained a section labeled "Educational Directory" which listed the complete directorial and inspectional personnel of the State Department of Education.¹⁴⁴

Compulsory Attendance

Compulsory school attendance, a perennial educational concern which was not to be fully satisfied for decades, and which had been advocated for years by educators in the New Orleans area, continued to draw the attention of the Association. A resolution adopted by the convention at New Orleans in 1908, as has been pointed out previously in this study, endorsed authorization of compulsory attendance with certain limitations. In his presidential address

¹⁴³Masthead, Louisiana School Work, V (September, 1916), 16.

¹⁴⁴Masthead, Louisiana School Work, III (April, 1915), 5.

before the convention at Alexandria in 1909, Warren Easton again brought this problem to the attention of the Association, declaring his belief that "a law for compulsory school attendance will sooner or later be upon our state books."¹⁴⁵ A law passed by the Legislature in 1910 established compulsory attendance in Orleans Parish for children in the eight-to-fourteen age group.¹⁴⁶ At Shreveport in 1914, the Association adopted a resolution advocating compulsory attendance on a local-option basis,¹⁴⁷ and in 1915, at Baton Rouge, urged enactment of "suitable compulsory education laws" to prevent the "enormous loss [to the public schools] due to poor attendance of pupils and to the large number of educable children who are never enrolled in school."¹⁴⁸ In his annual address to the convention at Lake Charles in 1916, Superintendent Harris

¹⁴⁵ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 2, 1909.

¹⁴⁶ "Act No. 222," Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1910 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: The New Advocate, official Journal, 1910), pp. 366-69.

¹⁴⁷ News item in The Times-Democrat and The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 19, 1914.

¹⁴⁸ News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 25, 1915.

warned that communities voting for compulsory attendance would find that "the facilities and teachers needed for the extra pupils that would thereby be added are inadequate."¹⁴⁹ A law passed by the Legislature in 1914 extended provisions of the enactment for New Orleans to other Louisiana municipalities having populations including more than 25,000 people.¹⁵⁰ A 1916 law required school attendance by children aged seven to fourteen for a 140-day session, or for the full term of the particular school, if it kept a shorter session.¹⁵¹ Superintendent F. M. Hamilton of Calcasieu Parish anticipated effective enforcement of the 1916 law in his area, advising that "[p]rovision has been made for the appointment of a sufficient number of truant officers."¹⁵² Robertson pointed out, however, that

¹⁴⁹News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 16, 1916.

¹⁵⁰"Act No. 91," Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1914 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1914), p. 207.

¹⁵¹"Act No. 27," Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1916 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1916), pp. 59-60.

¹⁵²F. M. Hamilton, "News Items from Calcasieu Parish," Louisiana School Work, V (September, 1916), 19.

enforcement of these early laws was not carried out in most localities, and that real compulsory school attendance was not to develop until nearly three decades after 1916.¹⁵³

Practical Education

Emphasis began to be placed on the immediate, practical effect public-school education could have on the vocational prospects of students who did not intend to go to college, and on the economic condition of the Louisiana populace, particularly that part of it made up of persons living in rural areas. Interest in improvement of rural schools through consolidation and development of special curricula had earlier beginnings, but it reached new heights during the part of Harris's superintendency which preceded the reorganization of the Association. The Association, characteristically, put its support behind the program of the State Department of Education. Harris's biennial reports of the period to the Governor and the Legislature did not reveal that this support was particularly important, although the work of the Agricultural Extension Department

¹⁵³Robertson, op. cit., p. 178.

of Louisiana State University, in providing speakers for meetings of local teachers' associations, was recorded as an effective aid in advancement of the program.¹⁵⁴ From 1908 until the reorganization of the Association, a Rural School Department was listed in accounts of convention activities as a part of the framework of the State organization. Later in the period, vocational and industrial education, and domestic science, advocated for Louisiana schools by the State Department of Education, received support at State teachers' conventions.

In the meeting of the Rural Schools Section at the convention in 1908, J. E. Keeny, president of Louisiana Industrial Institute at Ruston, "strongly advocated changing the courses" included in the curricula of rural schools in order to fit the school program to the needs of the community.¹⁵⁵ In his report to the Association in 1909, Secretary Bauer noted with satisfaction the work done by

¹⁵⁴ Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education to the Governor and to the General Assembly, 1909-10 and 1910-11 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1912), p. 102.

¹⁵⁵ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 11, 1908.

the new Committee on the Investigation of School Problems.

He said:

It is the opinion of the Secretary that the Association took a forward step last year in creation of the Committee on the Investigation of School Problems. The Association, through this committee, offers its members this year an exhaustive report on nature study and agriculture in the schools. . . .¹⁵⁶

Stressing agricultural education, the Association stepped up the emphasis of rural schools at the 1910 convention, and added industrial education to its field of interest in school responsibility for making curricular offerings have immediate practical value for individuals not bound for college. Addresses listed on the convention program and resolutions adopted by the assembled delegates reflected this increasing concern for practical education in the public schools. William R. Dodson, of Louisiana State University, addressed the convention on "The Relation of the Rural School to Country Life"; C. C. Henson, principal of the Isadore Newman Manual Training School in New Orleans, discussed manual training; J. E. Keeny delivered an address on industrial education; in a speech about rural

¹⁵⁶ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 2, 1909.

schools, Superintendent Harris told the convention that the employment of trained supervisors of instruction was the next logical step.¹⁵⁷ The Association summed up its endorsement of State Department activity and planning in a resolution which said:

. . . We most heartily commend the efforts of the state and parish superintendents to establish agricultural high schools and consolidated schools (elementary and high) throughout the state, for through such organization we hope ultimately to see perfected such a system of industrial education as shall utilize present opportunities and in a measure provide against future needs.¹⁵⁸

In 1912, the Association urged Congress to pass pending bills which provided for establishment of agricultural extension departments "in connection with agricultural colleges in the several states."¹⁵⁹ In 1913, C. A. Prosser, secretary of the National Board for the Promotion of Vocational Education, delivered one of the principal addresses at the New Orleans convention. His

¹⁵⁷News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 16, 1910.

¹⁵⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 17, 1910.

¹⁵⁹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 14, 1912.

topic was "The Meaning of Vocational Education."¹⁶⁰ His address was followed by adoption of resolutions urging provision of "grants out of the national treasury" to promote vocational education, and "recommending state grants for the proper education of those who toil in home, shop, factory or farm."¹⁶¹ Again in 1915 the Association called for increased State appropriations for vocational training in the public schools, this time including home economics in a sweeping resolution which declared:

We recommend increased appropriations for the high schools, domestic science departments, agricultural schools, and the consolidation of rural schools. We also recommend an adequate appropriation for industrial education in the parish of Orleans.¹⁶²

The business-education curriculum of Louisiana public schools received increasing emphasis. Led by Eleanor Lee Crigler of Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute, reported Louisiana School Work, "a number of the commercial teachers of the state . . . got together and organized a

¹⁶⁰ News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 19, 1913.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 25, 1915.

Commercial Teachers' Department of the State Teachers' Association" at the 1916 convention in Lake Charles. The journal added:

As the direct result of this meeting and a meeting held later in Baton Rouge a plan was developed to have contests in shorthand and typewriting at the State High School Rally next May.¹⁶³

Elected president of the Association at the 1914 convention was C. J. Brown, State supervisor of rural schools.¹⁶⁴ This act of recognition by the teachers' organization was one of many by which Brown was singled out in those years of emphasis on rural schools and agricultural education. In 1918, an article in Louisiana School Work summed it up:

. . . Mr. Brown has served as the President of the Louisiana Teachers' Association; as Secretary and President of the Southern Association of State Rural School Supervisors; and Secretary for two years and now is President of the National Association of State Rural School Supervisors. He has done institute work and made a number of addresses at institutes and associations throughout the country.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³"Commercial Contests at State Rally," Louisiana School Work, V (November, 1916), 115.

¹⁶⁴News item in The Times-Democrat and The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 19, 1914.

¹⁶⁵"C. J. Brown," Louisiana School Work, VI (February, 1918), 290.

The most ambitious action of the Association in seeking to improve conditions in rural Louisiana occurred at the 1914 convention when President Nicholas Bauer appointed a Rural Life Conference Committee whose function was to be "primarily to interest other organizations of the State in the promotion of rural life betterment and ultimately to secure the calling of a State-wide Rural Life Conference for Louisiana."¹⁶⁶ A member of the committee was J. W. Bateman, head of the Department of Agricultural Education at Louisiana State Normal College, whose proposal for the creation of such a committee had been adopted by the Rural Schools Department of the Association.¹⁶⁷ Other committeemen were: E. S. Richardson, director of agricultural extension work at Louisiana State University; C. J. Brown, State inspector of rural schools; J. H. Bres, superintendent of schools of West Baton Rouge Parish; and C. M. Hughes, superintendent of schools of East Baton Rouge

¹⁶⁶"Rural Life Conference Committee," Louisiana School Work, II (May, 1914), 33.

¹⁶⁷News item in The Times-Democrat and The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 18, 1914.

Parish.¹⁶⁸ Bateman recalled that the projected Rural Life Conference failed to materialize, because of political developments in the State, and because of changes of emphases in the programs related to improvement of rural education in Louisiana.¹⁶⁹

Parish Teachers' Associations

B. F. Mitchell, retired head of the Department of Education at Louisiana State University, pointed out in recalling the fifteen-year period preceding reorganization of the Association that the principal concern of Louisiana's most influential public-school leader of the time was improving the competence of teacher personnel.¹⁷⁰ That State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris considered parish teachers' association an inexact term was indicated by wording and punctuation in part of a biennial report issued early in his administration:

Practically all of the parishes operated what is termed "parish teachers' associations". The organization and work undertaken is as follows:

¹⁶⁸"Rural Life Conference Committee," loc. cit.

¹⁶⁹Interview with J. W. Bateman, May 18, 1967.

¹⁷⁰Interview with B. F. Mitchell, May 13, 1967.

On Saturday at the close of each school month, or on Friday and Saturday every two months, the teachers of the parish meet with the parish superintendent for the purpose of discussing questions which concern the schools; and of studying and reporting on the three professional books prescribed by the State Board of Education. All of the teachers of the various parishes are expected to take part in these meetings, and the majority of them do so. It is the duty of the State Institute Conductor to give suggestions as to the programs which shall be followed . . . and to meet the teachers in their associations as often as possible.¹⁷¹

Clearly, to Harris, parish associations had as their main function the in-service training of teachers, and were not, strictly speaking, voluntary associations. Superintendents in many localities organized parish teachers' associations for the specific purpose of enforcing the State institute law. In such a parish, the local association was spoken of in journal notices as "his" association, with the parish superintendent being understood as the antecedent of the possessive pronoun. Ives declared that "in 1914, the comprehensive programs at college level made the special services of the State Institute Conductor unnecessary."¹⁷² The parish institute work, however, was

¹⁷¹Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Education to the Governor and the General Assembly of Louisiana, 1911-1912 and 1912-1913, Vol. III (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1913), pp. 36 and 38.

¹⁷²Ives, op. cit., p. 180.

not discontinued altogether. The activity was supervised thereafter by John R. Conniff, chairman of the State examining committee.¹⁷³ A circular letter sent to the teachers of a parish association by the parish superintendent indicated that it still was receiving considerable stress as late as 1917:

. . . It is the desire of the board and the superintendent to stimulate the teachers to the end that the work in the schools for the latter part of the year shall be better than in the first part of the year. Every teacher in the parish is expected to attend and no excuses are desired. . . . The roll will be called promptly at 9 o'clock a.m., Monday morning and it is suggested that all teachers arrive . . . on the previous day. . . . Every teacher will be called upon to say something and they [*sic*] are requested to be brief and talk to the point. It is the desire to have the Parish School Board and local trustees present so that the work and the interest of the teachers may be seen.¹⁷⁴

Some parish associations during the period chose not to limit their activities to institute participation. In Washington Parish, the teachers' association joined Superintendent J. W. Bateman in staging "a great rally day at Bogalusa on Saturday, March 5, 1910. . . . Besides sixty

¹⁷³"Louisiana's New High School Inspector," Louisiana School Work, III (September, 1914), 40.

¹⁷⁴"Bienville Parish Teachers' Meeting," Louisiana School Work, V (March, 1917), 290.

teachers and 800 children of the parish many citizens were present."¹⁷⁵ A journal account of this event declared:

Mr. C. C. Hinson [sic], of the Isadore Newman Manual Training School, of New Orleans, together with Mr. W. C. Mayhew of . . . L.S.U., acted as judges and awarded the banners and premiums for the athletic and literary contests.

An excellent dinner and refreshments were served by the Mothers' Club, of Bogalusa. There is no doubt but that the work accomplished at this rally is a most creditable record of ability and interest on the part of the teachers and schools of the parish, and redounds to the great credit of the devoted and enthusiastic parish superintendent of Washington parish, Mr. J. W. Bateman.¹⁷⁶

In Ascension Parish, the institute meetings of the parish teachers' association were held from place to place, and were made social occasions in which citizens of the host communities participated. A contemporary account of Ascension association activities said:

Patrons wherever the meetings are held in the New River section prepare a regular basket dinner. A big table is usually erected and chickens, salads, sandwiches, cakes and pies are bountifully supplied. In winter, pork comes in for a substantial part of the

¹⁷⁵"School Folk and Their Doing," Louisiana School Review, XVII (May, 1910), 416.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p. 417.

feed; also preserves, etc.¹⁷⁷

Except for institute work and the "unofficial" activities initiated by patrons and teachers, local teachers' associations in Louisiana seemed to have a relatively small part to play in the educational scheme of things between 1908 and 1922. In newspaper and journal descriptions of undertakings of the State teachers' organization in that decade and a half, almost no mention was made of local associations. Toward the end of the period, educators began to look at parish associations from a different viewpoint. When C. A. Ives, chairman of the Committee on Reorganization, reported to the New Orleans convention of 1922, he stressed the need for assistance in organization of parish associations as one justification for employment of a full-time executive secretary.¹⁷⁸

School Legislation

The Association probably had as little to do with initiation and passage of school legislation in the fifteen

¹⁷⁷"Ascension Parish," Louisiana School Work, I (October, 1913), 17.

¹⁷⁸News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 7, 1922.

years before reorganization as during any period of its history. At its conventions, the Association dutifully passed resolutions applauding proposals for educational enactments originating with State school authorities. It formally declared itself pleased when such enactments were placed in the statute books. In April, 1921, on the eve of the adoption of a new State Constitution, it was so well satisfied with the existing revenue position of education that it passed a resolution requesting only that the Constitutional Convention not disturb the advantages enjoyed by the schools as a result of tax provisions already made. Its concurrent request that "the Agricultural College [be kept] within the state university" was further evidence of a seemingly great sense of satisfaction pervading the minds and spirits of Louisiana teachers in 1921. Its only suggestion for possible improvement in the State's educational setup echoed the chief preoccupation of the State Superintendent of Public Education during all those years--improvement of "the state's teacher training facilities."¹⁷⁹ Upon the return of Superintendent Harris to Baton Rouge from

¹⁷⁹News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 13, 1921.

Alexandria after the 1921 convention, he was reported to have said that "it was the greatest meeting ever held by the teachers of Louisiana in respect to professional spirit and attendance."¹⁸⁰ The Baton Rouge State-Times said:

The teachers were prompt in attendance at the meetings and showed a decided improvement in professional spirit, due, in the opinion of Mr. Harris to the fact that the teachers feel that the people of Louisiana have done their best for them and have treated them with consideration.¹⁸¹

The attitude of Louisiana educational leadership of the period concerning the proper role of the Association in advancement of the cause of public-school education in legislative halls was expressed plainly by V. L. Roy in his presidential address to the Baton Rouge convention in 1910. Roy told the assembled teachers:

While it is proper that this Association should record its convictions on all matters affecting public schools, I believe we have pursued the right course in refraining from adopting the methods of the lobbyist.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰News item in the State-Times [Baton Rouge], April 11, 1921.

¹⁸¹Ibid.

¹⁸²"Annual Address of the President of the Louisiana State Teachers Association, V. L. Roy," Louisiana School Review, XVII (May, 1910), 377-78.

Roy expanded this sense of purpose in a letter written in 1915 to C. M. Hughes, editor of Louisiana School Work. He wrote: "Our association was not organized for purposes of original investigation, but rather for its inspirational and social ends."¹⁸³

Examples of resolutions passed by the Association's conventions from 1908 to 1922 have been given in discussion of the emphasis applied to expansion of vocational education. Other resolutions of the Association through the years placed sex education outside the purview of the public-school teacher;¹⁸⁴ recommended placing all State educational institutions under one governing board;¹⁸⁵ urged equalization of assessments;¹⁸⁶ opposed introduction of military training into the public schools;¹⁸⁷ petitioned for an

¹⁸³Letter to the editor, Louisiana School Work, III (May-June, 1915), 33.

¹⁸⁴News item in The Times-Democrat and The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 19, 1914.

¹⁸⁵Ibid.

¹⁸⁶News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 25, 1915.

¹⁸⁷News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 15, 1916.

increase in teachers' salaries after teachers began flocking to defense industries during World War I.¹⁸⁸

If the Association had little to do with school legislation other than to endorse proposals and be officially pleased with accomplishments, it was kept well-informed of legislative developments. The move to keep the Association abreast of changes and innovations in State school laws was particularly noticeable from 1914 until the reorganization. In the September issue of Louisiana School Work in 1914 appeared "an outline of the school legislation enacted by the General Assembly, session of 1914."¹⁸⁹ The same kind of résumé of legislation affecting Louisiana schools was published following the 1916 session of the General Assembly.¹⁹⁰ A copy of the compulsory-school law of 1916 was presented in the October issue of Louisiana School Work that year.¹⁹¹ A letter addressed by Harris to

¹⁸⁸News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 15, 1917.

¹⁸⁹Untitled article, Louisiana School Work, III (September, 1914), 34-38.

¹⁹⁰"School Legislation in 1916," Louisiana School Work, V (September, 1916), 9-10.

¹⁹¹"Copy of Compulsory Education Law," Louisiana School Work, V (October, 1916), 57.

parish superintendents and members of parish school boards in 1918 explained the provisions of three proposed constitutional amendments which were to be voted on in November, and urged support for them.¹⁹² Harris directed another letter to superintendents and board members in 1918, outlining again all legislation passed in the 1918 legislative session which affected the public schools. This letter, containing a new and expanded list of proposed amendments, was published by Southern School Work for the edification of its subscribers.¹⁹³ In 1919, the January issue of the journal carried the complete text of Harris's exultant letter to superintendents and board members, "directing their attention to the significance of the educational amendments to the constitution, at the November election."¹⁹⁴

Cooperation with Other Agencies

The Association continued to cooperate with other

¹⁹²"Proposed Educational Amendments to the Constitution," Southern School Work, VII (September, 1918), 15-17.

¹⁹³"Louisiana School Legislation," Southern School Work, VII (October, 1918), 90-91.

¹⁹⁴"Louisiana's Progress," Southern School Work, VII (January, 1919), 245-48.

educational agencies. It maintained relations with the National Education Association, preserving connections which were effected largely through participation by some of its more outstanding members in conventions of the Department of Superintendence. Mention has been made of Harris's concern that Louisiana parish superintendents attend the Chicago meeting of the Department of Superintendence in 1909. At this convention, in a conference of state and county (parish) superintendents, Harris himself discussed "The Worth of a Trained County Superintendent."¹⁹⁵ J. B. Aswell was leader of the conference, which also heard V. L. Roy, whose topic was: "Is the Employment of Untrained Teachers the Cause or the Result of Low Salaries?"¹⁹⁶ Ten years later; at another convention of the Department of Superintendence in Chicago, the topic of Harris's address to the Council of State Departments of Education was: "Educational Adjustments Following the War."¹⁹⁷ Of the convention, Harris wrote:

¹⁹⁵NEA, Proceedings, 1909, p. 161.

¹⁹⁶Ibid.

¹⁹⁷NEA, Proceedings, 1919, pp. 649-52.

Louisiana was fairly well represented, there being between twenty and twenty-five Louisianians in attendance.

The South had little representation on the program--it seldom, if ever, receives much consideration in the make-up of the general program. This is evidently an oversight on the part of our northern brethren who are in control of the organization, for there are numerous Southerners whom the nation could hear to advantage.¹⁹⁸

Other Louisiana educators were heard at conventions of the Department of Superintendence. Among them were Paul B. Habans, assistant superintendent of New Orleans public schools, who spoke to the Round Table on Compulsory Education, School Census, and Child Welfare at the Kansas City convention in 1917, taking as his topic: "The Factors of an Adequate School Census--How They May Be Realized."¹⁹⁹ Another Louisianian heard by the Department of Superintendence was P. C. Fair, school principal at Mansfield, who addressed the conference of county (parish) superintendents at Atlantic City in 1918 on the topic: "The County Superintendency and Its Problems."²⁰⁰ This participation of

¹⁹⁸T. H. Harris, "Louisiana at N. E. A.," Southern School Work, VII (April, 1919), 417.

¹⁹⁹NEA, Proceedings, 1917, p. 665.

²⁰⁰NEA, Proceedings, 1918, p. 478.

Louisiana school administrators in conventions of the Department of Superintendence may be taken as a reflection of Harris's high regard for that body. In a letter to parish superintendents and high-school principals in 1917, Harris wrote: "It is not necessary to say that the Department of Superintendence stands at the head of the educational meetings of the world."²⁰¹

The official organization of Louisiana music teachers began holding its conventions in conjunction with the State Association of teachers, which had a department of its own for teachers of music in public schools. The Association's Constitution forbade its absorption of the music teachers' State organization because that body's membership included teachers in private schools. The Music Department of the Association, in a spirit of cooperation, solved this problem by disbanding. A news account of events at the Lake Charles convention of 1916 reported:

The music department of the State Teachers' Association voted this morning to disband and the individual

²⁰¹"All Off for Kansas City," Louisiana School Work, V (January, 1917), 192.

members will join the State Music Teachers' Association, which is concluding its annual meeting here today.²⁰²

This move by public-school music teachers seemed to have Harris's endorsement. An article in the January issue of Louisiana School Work in 1917 reported:

. . . The Louisiana Music Teachers' Association is doing a thoroughly praiseworthy work. One hundred and seventy-five teachers are enrolled in its ranks. It is committed to the policy of state-wide standardization of music teaching in all of its phases. . . . The association, with its aims and policies, is sanctioned by the State Superintendent. It has the special recommendation of being an organization with which all the various music teachers are cooperating.²⁰³

The Commercial Teachers' Department of the Association became very active during the period immediately preceding reorganization of the Association. An article in the school journal told of this activity, which was not limited to the State of Louisiana:

The Louisiana State Teachers' Association was represented at the National Convention of Commercial Teachers, held at Chicago, December 27-30, by [Eleanor Lee Crigler of Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute]. A report was given of the work of the Louisiana Commercial Teachers' Association accomplished

²⁰²News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 15, 1916.

²⁰³"The Music Situation in Louisiana," Louisiana School Work, V (January, 1917), 198-99.

in the past eight months: We have joined the State High School Rally held annually in Baton Rouge and will conduct a contest in shorthand and in typewriting. We have a department in the State School Journal. We sent a delegate to the National Teachers' Association. Our report compared favorably with the reports of the other states represented.²⁰⁴

When World War I began in Europe, the State Association of Louisiana teachers threw its support behind a movement to abolish war as a means of settling international disputes. It organized an American Peace League Department with V. L. Roy as president and E. L. Stephens as secretary. This department praised President Woodrow Wilson in 1914 for "his peace policy toward Mexico."²⁰⁵ At its convention in 1915, the Association unanimously adopted a peace resolution drawn up by its American Peace League Committee. The resolution said:

Recognizing, as we must, the ruthless hand of war passing with unprecedented ferocity and destruction across the world, knowing the results must extend to every nation, every home, and unto our children and our children's children for many generations; conscious further that war as a means of settling international disputes is archaic, unnatural, hideous and unnecessary, we are glad to welcome to our state the efforts of the

²⁰⁴"National Convention of Commercial Teachers," Louisiana School Work, V (March, 1917), 286.

²⁰⁵News item in The Times-Democrat and The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 18, 1914.

American Peace Society to organize the sentiment of all right-thinking citizens in behalf of a constructive substitute for war in terms of a congress and high court of nations.²⁰⁶

When the United States entered the war in 1917, the Association was just as resolute in its desire for victory as it had been earlier in its wish for peace. At Alexandria in 1917 it adopted a resolution of cooperation:

Resolved, That the State Teachers' Association of Louisiana offer the President of the United States, through the public school system of Louisiana, complete cooperation with the federal government in securing increased production, economy in the use of food products, thrift and elimination of waste in every home and the promotion of physical fitness in the people of the state.²⁰⁷

Fluctuating Organizational Stability

The fifteen years that passed between T. H. Harris's succession to the State superintendency and the reorganization of the State teachers' Association saw the membership and economic status of the Association swing up and down. The most detailed records in these two areas during that

²⁰⁶News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 25, 1915.

²⁰⁷News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 13, 1917.

period were kept by Nicholas Bauer during his terms of office as part-time secretary of the Association. In his report to the convention at Lake Charles in 1911, Bauer reported that for the first time in a decade the Association had been unable to pay its bills when they fell due. He told the convention:

Last year, for the first time since 1901, the association was unable to meet its financial obligations promptly. This was due to the falling off in membership for the past two years--our roll decreasing from 1,871 to 1,471, a loss of 400 members--to the great expense incident to the work of the committee on investigation of school problems and to the large amounts paid as honorariums to our distinguished speakers that addressed the association last year.²⁰⁸

Bauer reported that the Association had been relieved of its embarrassment when "many prominent public school men and women came to the front, and, by paying five years' dues in advance, restored the association to its former solvent condition."²⁰⁹ In this part of the Association's history, membership was largely limited, as it had been from the beginning, to teachers who actually attended conventions and

²⁰⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 7, 1911.

²⁰⁹Ibid.

paid dues in order to qualify to cast ballots in Association elections, and to act on matters which required decision by vote. This circumstance must have resulted in a decimating loss of members in 1912 when flood conditions in the State resulted in the attendance of only about eight hundred persons at the Alexandria convention.²¹⁰ By 1914, however, the Association had recouped any economic loss due to the floods of 1912, for Secretary L. J. Alleman's report to the Shreveport convention "showed the association in a flourishing condition," with "a balance on hand of \$576.68."²¹¹

This was a period in which school administrators were constantly exhorting classroom teachers to join the Association. In 1910, V. L. Roy addressed an open letter to the public-school teachers of Louisiana. He said: "Permit me to urge . . . that the superintendents take up without delay the question of providing for the attendance

²¹⁰New item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 13, 1912.

²¹¹News item in The Times-Democrat and The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 17, 1914.

of all teachers."²¹² In 1915, L. J. Alleman, declaring that the "chief function of an association of teachers is to make it possible for its members to hear . . . leaders once a year," told superintendents and principals that school boards "should be urged to adopt resolutions urging attendance."²¹³ It was noted by Louisiana School Work in 1917 that only 13 per cent of Louisiana public-school teachers were members of the Association, "which means that of our over 7,500 teachers approximately 1,000 are association members." The journal declared: "Aggressive campaigns throughout this state by principals, superintendents and all friends of teachers and education is [sic] first needed to increase the effectiveness of our association."²¹⁴ It was evident that school administrators and school boards were depended upon heavily to do whatever needed to be done to keep up the Association's membership roll. In the March issue of Louisiana School Work in 1918,

²¹²"A Call to the State Teachers' Association," Louisiana School Review, XVII (March, 1910), 286.

²¹³"Louisiana State Teachers' Association," op. cit., pp. 26-27.

²¹⁴"You Can Do What Others Are Doing," Louisiana School Work, V (April, 1917), 322.

five pages were devoted to statements by leading figures in educational administration who endorsed the Association and urged eligible persons to join up. Among the leaders whose statements were published were: T. H. Harris, State Superintendent of Public Education; C. A. Ives, State high school inspector; V. L. Roy, president of Louisiana State Normal College; J. E. Keeny, president of Louisiana Industrial Institute; C. C. Henson, superintendent of schools of Rapides Parish; Charles F. Trudeau, assistant high school inspector; John M. Foote, State supervisor of rural schools; and J. N. Yeager, superintendent of schools in Lake Charles.²¹⁵

Until the period drew to a close at the beginning of the third decade of the twentieth century, however, the Association's membership made practically no gain. Secretary Bauer reported to the convention in New Orleans in 1908 that 1,863 persons were in attendance at that conclave and had paid dues. An exact count of individuals attending the Alexandria convention of 1921 is not available, but

²¹⁵"Louisiana Teachers' Association," Southern School Work, VI (March, 1918), 322-23.

estimates by Harris²¹⁶ and J. M. Gwinn,²¹⁷ superintendent of New Orleans public schools, indicated that, as late as then, not more than eighteen hundred persons were in attendance, although Gwinn insisted that there were between seven and eight hundred other qualified members who were not present. It was around this time that interest in the Association began to increase markedly as events leading to reorganization began to unfold. After fifteen years in the doldrums, the membership lists of the Association began to lengthen again.

Association Departments

While the size of its membership roster increased little during most of the years between 1908 and 1922, the lists of the Association's departments carried in official convention proceedings, and in newspaper accounts of activities of the Association, seemed to indicate a steady growth in use of this method of emphasizing differences

²¹⁶ News item in the State-Times [Baton Rouge], April 11, 1921.

²¹⁷ News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 13, 1921.

in professional specialization and similarities in more comprehensive areas of interest. No constitutional provisions were made for creation of departments. A Constitution of the Association published in 1903 made no mention of them.²¹⁸ A later Constitution, appearing in the organization's journal in 1917, also failed to make specific provision for creation or recognition of departments. The 1917 Constitution, however, set forth meticulous rules for the formation of a Louisiana Council of Education,²¹⁹ a body which received recognition as a "department" in official proceedings of the convention held at Baton Rouge in 1918.²²⁰ The nine departments listed by The Daily Picayune in its stories covering the convention of 1908 in New Orleans were for rural schools, principals, classical languages, kindergartens, primary departments, high schools, art and manual training, grammar schools, and school

²¹⁸"Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisiana State Public School Teachers Association," op. cit., pp. 120-22.

²¹⁹"Constitution and By-Laws, Louisiana Teachers' Association," Louisiana School Work, V (June, 1917), 425-26.

²²⁰"Louisiana Teachers' Association," Southern School Work, I (June, 1918), 485.

boards.²²¹ Since members of school boards were not admitted as active members of the Association, it seems probable that inclusion of a department for them was largely an act of recognition, since many board members, representing parishes throughout the State, attended sessions of the Association annually. By 1918, the number of departments increased to thirteen. In the intervening years, new ones were created, some disappeared, and others continued under altered designations. A list of thirteen departments, including the Louisiana Council of Education, appeared in the official proceedings of 1918. Others identified officially in these proceedings were: Rural School Department, Kindergarten Department, Primary Department, Grammar School Department, High School Department, Practical Arts Department, Classical Department, Modern Language Department, English Department, Geography Department, Commercial School Department, and Mathematics Department.²²² New to the list since 1908 were the

²²¹News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 10, 1908.

²²²"Louisiana Teachers' Association," loc. cit.

Louisiana Council of Education and subject-matter departments for modern languages, English, geography, commercial subjects, and mathematics. Gone were the departments for principals and school boards. The "art and manual training" department of 1908 had been renamed the Practical Arts Department. Among departments which had come into existence and then had vanished, temporarily or permanently, were a Music Department, a Civic Effort Department,²²³ and a Social Hygiene Department.²²⁴ Despite the growth of departmental activity early in the present century, it was not until adoption of a new Constitution in 1922 as a part of reorganization that constitutional provision was made for formation of departments and sections.

Honorary Presidents

A desire to honor Superintendent John McNeese of Calcasieu Parish led to creation by constitutional amendment

²²³"Program, Louisiana State Public School Teachers' Association, April 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1909," Louisiana School Review, XVI (April, 1909), 252-54.

²²⁴News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 24, 1915.

of the office of honorary president at the Lake Charles convention in April, 1911.²²⁵ The amendment was strenuously opposed by D. B. Showalter, Rapides Parish superintendent, who held that McNeese should be made active president.²²⁶ The Association responded by electing McNeese, who was too ill to attend the convention sessions, active president, and by adopting the amendment. Before the convention adjourned, J. W. Nicholson, mathematics professor at Louisiana State University, was elected the first honorary president of the Association of Louisiana teachers. The honor was bestowed upon three other outstanding Louisiana educators. They were: B. C. Caldwell, former president of Louisiana State Normal College, elected in 1912;²²⁷ Thomas D. Boyd, president of Louisiana State University, elected in 1913;²²⁸ and C. E. Byrd, superintendent of schools in

²²⁵News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 9, 1911.

²²⁶News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 7, 1911.

²²⁷News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 12, 1912.

²²⁸News item in The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 18, 1913.

Caddo Parish, elected in 1914.²²⁹ The office of honorary president was abolished by constitutional amendment at the Baton Rouge convention of the Association in 1915. This action coincided with another change sought for years by many members of the Association, for a second constitutional amendment adopted by the 1915 convention finally altered the organization's long original name, giving it its present form--Louisiana Teachers' Association.²³⁰

Changing Times

The changing economic conditions caused by World War I, and the emergence of a sizeable group of young educators who were determined to make of teaching a career, were important among developments which led to reorganization of the Association. Of these, the second factor probably was the more influential. B. F. Mitchell recalled that assemblies of the Association before reorganization were like lecture-hall audiences, with the

²²⁹News item in The Times-Democrat and The Daily Picayune [New Orleans], April 17, 1914.

²³⁰News item in The Times-Picayune [New Orleans], April 25, 1915.

rank and file, seated out front, having little to say about organizational proceedings before, during, or after the annual conclaves which provided top-level educational figures with occasions for publicly voicing their views about school matters.²³¹ The extent of influence of officialdom in the affairs of the Association may be judged by referring to the names of the individuals who were members of the Association's Executive Committee at the 1918 convention. They were: J. M. Gwinn, superintendent of New Orleans public schools; E. L. Stephens, president of Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute; V. L. Roy, president of Louisiana State Normal College; and C. J. Brown, State supervisor of rural schools. T. H. Harris, as State Superintendent of Public Education, was an ex-officio member.²³² This was an understandable development, since the Association had been kept alive from its birth by educational administrative leaders who were among the first truly professional people in Louisiana

²³¹Interview with B. F. Mitchell, May 13, 1967.

²³²"Louisiana Teachers' Association," loc. cit.

public-school education. At least partially as a result of the emphasis these men had continued to give to the necessity of professional preparation for teachers, a body of professionally conscious individuals, many of whom were young principals, now appeared on the Louisiana educational scene, and were no longer willing just to sit back and listen, and to follow along.²³³ They were determined to take active part in bringing advancement for the State's program of tax-supported education.

War-accentuated Problems

The sharp rise in the cost of living caused by the war made old problems of public-school education seem more crucial. As early as 1914, continuance of teachers in their jobs was becoming a serious administrative concern.

T. H. Harris said:

. . . Sixty-five out of every one hundred white teachers employed in the public schools last session were in their positions for the first time. . . . Only eight out of every hundred had been in their positions last session six years or more. In several of the parishes not one teacher had been in the same position longer than three years, and as many as 80 per cent of

²³³ Interview with B. F. Mitchell, May 13, 1967.

the teachers in some of the parishes were in their schools for the first time.²³⁴

To relieve this condition, which he felt detracted greatly from the effectiveness of the educational program, Harris recommended permanent status for teachers after proof of ability, and increases in salary in recognition of continuance in a specific teaching position.²³⁵

By 1918, the situation had become far worse. A writer for Southern School Work reported:

State High School Inspector C. A. Ives reports that there will be a shortage of two thousand teachers next September, according to estimates received from school officials throughout Louisiana.²³⁶

In his address to the convention of the Association at Baton Rouge in 1918, Harris noted the exodus from the profession of some of its most competent members, who were leaving, he said, to accept much higher pay obtainable in other fields. He did not blame them, declaring that "in self-defense they will be compelled to find work in other

²³⁴T. H. Harris, "The Wanderlust among Teachers," Louisiana School Work, III (October, 1914), 7.

²³⁵Ibid., p. 8.

²³⁶"Department of Educational News," Southern School Work, VI (April, 1918), 422.

fields."²³⁷ The situation described by Harris in his address had already resulted in reaction among professionally conscious young teachers and principals who were seeking a means of voicing their convictions and of making the weight of their thinking and influence felt.

Louisiana Professional Teachers' League

Many principals and teachers began to feel that the Association did not belong to them. This doubt was implicit in an article published in a journal column edited by R. C. Forman, principal of Oakdale High School. The column was the voice of a new organization called the "Louisiana Professional Teachers' League." The article said:

The teaching profession in the state of Louisiana, so far as it is affected by any organized effort on the part of the teaching force itself, is jostling along and going nowhere. . . . The point is not that there are so many bad among us, but as a profession we have no uniform and generally accepted standard. We have no definite aim and purpose. We can not present a solid front. We have no organ to utter a single and effective voice expressing our common beliefs, our

²³⁷T. H. Harris, "Necessary Support of Public Schools," Southern School Work, VI (April, 1918), 392.

common desires and our common demands for our professional advancement.²³⁸

Forman wrote that the Louisiana Professional Teachers' League "was brought into being last April [1917] at the State Teachers' Association in Alexandria."²³⁹ C. V. Reser, however, placed its point of origin at Garig Hall on the old Louisiana State University campus at Baton Rouge. He wrote: "At the summer school session of 1916 at the Louisiana State University a preliminary organization to project an Association of Professional Teachers was effected."²⁴⁰ A committee was appointed, he said, to draft and adopt resolutions "proposing and setting forth the purposes" of the new organization. Since the resolutions adopted by the committee clearly indicated that originators of the Louisiana Professional Teachers' League intended to cooperate with State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris and the Association of Louisiana teachers, and

²³⁸"Louisiana Professional Teachers' League," Louisiana School Work, VI (September, 1917), 13.

²³⁹Ibid.

²⁴⁰C. V. Reser, "The Professionalizing of Teaching in Louisiana," Louisiana School Work, V (February, 1917), 230.

since they summed up the goals sought by Louisiana's young professional educators of fifty years ago, they are presented here in their entirety:

Be it resolved, That it is the sense of this committee to propose the organization among the teachers of the State of an association, the purpose of which shall be primarily the professionalizing of the teaching business in Louisiana by:

1. Adopting and promoting a standard of ethics among teachers affecting their relations with each other and with the communities which they serve.
2. By endorsing and sustaining the plan of the present High School Inspector of the State for raising the standard of teaching in the High Schools.
3. By promoting the establishment of a merit system by which teachers may be rated and employed.
4. By discouraging unnecessary and frequent changes of position by teachers and by securing, if possible, a system of employing principals and experienced teachers on longer term contracts.
5. By cooperating with the State Department in its efforts to improve our educational system, and with the State Teachers' Association in every way possible for the accomplishment of its aims and purposes.
6. By every other worthy and legitimate means to encourage the growth of a greater and more intelligent public school sentiment among the people of our State.²⁴¹

Members of the committee which prepared and adopted

²⁴¹Ibid., pp. 230 and 232.

the resolutions were Reser, who was chairman, R. C. Forman, B. F. Mitchell, and A. J. Caldwell.

Organization of the Louisiana Professional Teachers' League proceeded rapidly. Its meeting was a part of the official program of the convention of the Association of Louisiana teachers at Baton Rouge in April, 1918, and the Association set aside an entire afternoon exclusively for a meeting of the League.²⁴² A Constitution and a code of ethics were adopted. Officers elected were: J. M. Smith, president; W. B. Hatcher, vice-president; and B. F. Mitchell, treasurer. The work of the League was not intended to oppose what might have been considered the primary concerns of the Association. A spirit of cooperation was clearly indicated by a list of proposed activities for the new organization in 1918 and 1919. Adopted by the League on April 5, 1918, in session at the Association's convention, the list proposed:

1. That the League give organized support to the legislative program outlined and advocated by Supt. Harris and his department.

²⁴²"Louisiana Teachers' Association," op. cit., p. 492.

2. That the League, through its Executive Committee, arrange a state-wide campaign to arouse the public in behalf of this and other needed legislation.

3. That our League provide representation at Baton Rouge during the session of the Legislature to get favorable legislative action.

4. That parish organizations be provided for.

5. That the campaign for higher educational and ethical standards be continued.²⁴³

In addition, the League directed its board of directors to report by November 15, 1918, the time and place of the next League meeting. The writer of this study has found no record of the projected second meeting. In April, 1921, at Alexandria, P. H. Griffith, Baton Rouge school principal,²⁴⁴ who soon was to become the first full-time executive secretary of the Association of Louisiana teachers, and who had been named a member of the first executive committee of the Louisiana Professional Teachers' League, was elected president of the State teachers' Association.

²⁴³Ibid., p. 507.

²⁴⁴News item in the State-Times [Baton Rouge], April 9, 1921.

Reorganization of the Association

Loss of school time caused by the influenza epidemic of 1918-19 caused cancellation of the convention scheduled for April, 1919, in New Orleans. A. J. Caldwell, president of the Association, in a letter to Louisiana teachers published in Southern School Work, advised:

On account of the great amount of time lost from school during the present session, and at the suggestion of Supt. Harris, I have called off the State Teachers' Association which was to have been held at New Orleans, April 10-12.²⁴⁵

The 1920 convention of the Association was cancelled by the organization's Executive Committee, because of a shortage of hotel rooms, said Secretary Alleman, and because "it would not be right, under present conditions, to require teachers to go to the expense necessary to attend the meeting."²⁴⁶ After two years without a convention, the organization met again at Alexandria in 1921, and a move for reorganization began. By the time the Association met for its 1922 convention in New Orleans,

²⁴⁵"To the Teachers of Louisiana," Southern School Work, VII (March, 1919), 357.

²⁴⁶"No Meeting of L. T. A. This School Year," Southern School Work, VIII (February, 1920), 255.

State High School Inspector C. A. Ives, chairman of a Committee on Reorganization, was ready to outline his group's recommendations, which were embodied in a new Constitution offered for the Association's consideration.²⁴⁷ E. B. Robert recalled that the convention approved the Constitution section by section, voting for each provision after hearing it explained and discussed at length.²⁴⁸ The Constitution of 1922 has been placed in the appendices as Appendix A, with Constitutions of the Association in effect in 1903 and 1952. These Constitutions offer insight into changing attitudes and concerns of Louisiana teachers during an eventful period of fifty years.

In addition to providing for the employment of a full-time executive secretary, and establishment of an official journal to be distributed periodically to all members, the new Constitution (1) made November the regular convention month; (2) provided for an Executive Council to conduct the affairs of the Association between conventions;

²⁴⁷"Constitution," Southern School Work, X (June, 1922), 373-75.

²⁴⁸Interview with E. B. Robert, January 9, 1968.

(3) established a House of Delegates and prescribed a method of apportioning delegates among the parishes; (4) provided for organization and affiliation of parish associations, which were to elect parish representatives to the House of Delegates; (5) authorized the House of Delegates to create departments; (6) empowered the House of Delegates to establish standing committees. The Constitution made no allusion to public education in its statement of membership requirements, qualifying any "person who is actively engaged in the work of education in the State of Louisiana." Operating under the new Constitution, the convention adjourned after a second 1922 convention was scheduled to meet in November.

Reorganization was completed in November and December, 1922, and January, 1923. At a meeting of the new Executive Council in the office of State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris, December 2, B. F. Mitchell, chairman by virtue of being president of the Association, appointed a committee to study the budget, with particular attention to be given to the salary of the executive secretary and to the cost of publishing the newly

established journal.²⁴⁹ The Council met again in New Orleans on January 17, and elected P. H. Griffith to be the Association's first executive secretary, setting his annual salary at \$4,000.²⁵⁰ The Association then was ready to embark on a new period of its history.

²⁴⁹Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 2.

²⁵⁰Ibid., p. 4.

CHAPTER III

ADMINISTRATION OF P. H. GRIFFITH, 1923-1931

As published in Southern School Work in June, 1922, the Constitution under which the Association of Louisiana teachers was reorganized did not contain a preamble setting forth organizational aims. It may be assumed, perhaps, that aims had not changed since adoption of the Constitution of 1917, the preamble to which declared: "To elevate the profession of teachers and to promote the interests of the public schools of Louisiana, we have organized an association. . . ." ¹ With a full-time executive secretary at work, however, organizational activities and interests were greatly expanded. Upon taking office, Executive Secretary P. H. Griffith moved into the Association's first established headquarters, located in rented office space in Baton Rouge on the "second floor of the Wieck Building, which is on the west side of Third Street,

¹"Constitution and By-Laws, Louisiana Teachers' Association," Louisiana School Work, V (June, 1917), 425.

one block from the Istrouma Hotel."² Soon afterward came events related to a wide range of interests and activities of the Association.

I. GENERAL SERVICE TO PUBLIC EDUCATION

The reorganized Association set to work immediately to improve the general basis of public-school education in the State by backing progressive legislation, by sponsoring research into pressing school problems, and by emphasizing the study of Louisiana as an important part of the curriculum.

Influence on Legislation

The role of the Association in influencing the course of legislation designed to improve the quality and the economic foundations of public-school education was a prominent part of the organization's activity after the Association's founding at Alexandria in 1892. This area of interest received increased emphasis after reorganization, with the Association thereafter often taking the leading,

²"Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, I (May, 1923), 5.

rather than supporting, part in campaigns for passage of bills felt to be in the best interest of public-school education.

The Tobacco Tax Bill. B. F. Mitchell pointed to passage of the Tobacco Tax Bill as the first major victory for the Association as a leader in the field of legislative advancement.³ Mitchell credited Griffith with being a key figure in the political maneuvering which finally resulted in the bill's passage. In a statement issued following the legislative victory, State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris cited work done by E. S. Richardson, superintendent of schools in Webster Parish. Richardson was president of the Association while the Legislature was in session in 1926, and, according to Harris, for "a month or more, . . . laid aside the duties of his office, spent practically all of his time in Baton Rouge and devoted the best that is in him to the luxury tax [sic] measure."⁴

In his report of November 18, 1926, to the Executive

³Interview with B. F. Mitchell, May 13, 1967.

⁴"The Sylvest Luxury Bill," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IV (September, 1926), 10.

Council, the executive secretary described the legislative battle:

After a continuous and hard-fought battle lasting eight weeks, the enemy was finally out-generaled, out-manuevered, and defeated, permitting a bill to pass that had weathered three unfavorable reports in the Ways and Means Committee, and on the floor of the House, two motions for indefinite postponement, two for tabling the whole subject matter, and two for final passage.⁵

Framed to impose a tax on both tobacco and cosmetics when introduced in the House of Representatives by Murphy J. Sylvest, the bill was amended before passage to affect only tobacco products.⁶ Griffith, who was managing editor of the Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association as well as executive secretary of the Association, gave the event the prominence he felt it was due by devoting almost an entire issue of the Association's journal to an account of the fight for passage. In addition, he published the text of the law verbatim.⁷ The law imposed a tax of 10 per cent on the "retail selling price of all cigarettes,

⁵Printed pamphlet inserted in Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 75.

⁶"The Sylvest Luxury Bill," op. cit., p. 17.

⁷Ibid., pp. 37-43.

smoking and chewing tobacco, cigars, cheroots and snuff made of tobacco or any substitute thereof."⁸ The success of this initial venture into the field of legislation led him, in his report to the Executive Council presented November 18, 1926, to urge that "it is important that the Louisiana Teachers' Association maintain capital headquarters during each legislative session."⁹ He reiterated this recommendation in his report to the Council on May 13, 1928, emphasizing also the advisability of having an active Legislative Committee on hand at all sessions of the Legislature.¹⁰

The tobacco tax remained in force for two years. When the Association heard that an effort would be made to repeal it in the 1928 session of the Legislature, a campaign was launched for its retention after modification. In his report to the Executive Council on May 13, 1928, Griffith

⁸"Act No. 197," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1926 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1926), p. 322.

⁹Printed pamphlet inserted in Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 75.

¹⁰Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 112.

noted that the tobacco tax had resulted in significant benefits for the public schools of Louisiana. He said:

The funds received from the Tobacco Tax were sufficient to run the schools of each parish from three to eight weeks. In several cases, the salaries of teachers were increased as a result of additional funds supplied by the Tobacco Tax, and in many parishes, the schools were permitted to run a month longer, thus giving the teachers an additional month of employment.¹¹

The Association's battle for continuation of the tax, however, was doomed to failure. An agreement between State Superintendent Harris and the Governor resulted, according to Griffith, in repeal of the tobacco tax, and its replacement by a re-enacted severance-tax fund, a part of which was to go to the schools, for providing free textbooks, and for adding revenue to the State public-school funds.¹² Griffith described the new arrangement as "more than ample to replace the Tobacco Tax and to purchase textbooks."¹³ He gave Harris full credit for the negotiations

¹¹Ibid., p. 119.

¹²"Act No. 100," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1928 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1928), p. 114.

¹³Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 121.

which led to passage of the legislation.¹⁴

Election of parish superintendents. Griffith gave credit to the Louisiana Teachers' Association for much of the hard work and vigilant observation of legislative strategems which finally resulted in shelving a bill which would have resulted in the election of parish superintendents by popular vote. In his report of May 13, 1928, Griffith told the Executive Council that this was an even more vital matter than the tobacco tax, since the "change . . . to election by popular vote would wreck our school system."¹⁵ He intimated that pressure exerted by the Association, added to the influence of other agencies, caused the bill's defeat.

Educational research. One of the earliest standing committees appointed by B. F. Mitchell, first president of the Association under the reorganization, was a "Committee for the Study of Educational Problems."¹⁶ When Georgene

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 113.

¹⁶"Committees for the Investigation of School Problems," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, I (May, 1923), 39.

Hughes, of Natchitoches, reported to the House of Delegates as chairman of this committee, on November 19, 1925, the name of the group had been changed to "Committee on Educational Research."¹⁷ Under Miss Hughes, the committee had undertaken an educational survey and had run into difficulties. The Association's next Committee on Educational Research performed a service which had an immediate effect on legislative provisions for the support of Louisiana's school system, according to Griffith.¹⁸ Appointed by E. S. Richardson, who was elected president of the Association at the 1925 convention in Baton Rouge, the committee held its first meeting on January 2, 1926, and voted to "accept 'Inequalities in Our School System' as their problem and to prepare a temporary report by March 15." Members of the committee were: M. S. Robertson, State Department of Education; J. B. Myers, principal of Baton Rouge Junior High School; and L. S. Rugg, principal of West Alexandria Grammar School.¹⁹ Supplemented with twenty-two

¹⁷Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 52.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁹"New Committee on Educational Research Meets," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (February, 1926), 30.

carefully constructed charts and five tables, the committee's final report appeared in the April issue of the Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association. Its authors, summarizing the report's forty-eight pages, said:

The committee is of the opinion that the following conclusions are warranted by the analysis of the data presented in this study:

1. In all of the measures of educational opportunity used in the three sections of this study, striking inequalities appear among the white school systems of the parishes.

2. These inequalities seem closely related to inequalities in the distribution of taxable wealth per white educable and per white pupil enrolled in the parishes.

3. In general, the parishes exerting the greatest effort in providing local support, as measured in millage of special taxation, are among those ranking lowest on many of the measures used and are among those least able to provide local support for their white schools.

4. If these inequalities of educational opportunity among the white school systems of the parishes are to be decreased, provision must be made for a considerable state school fund to be used for equalization of the burden of support.²⁰

This report of the Committee on Educational Research

²⁰"Inequalities in Educational Opportunity in Louisiana," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (April, 1926), 76.

may have been a decisive factor in passage of the Tobacco Tax Bill, according to Griffith, who said it "was used effectively during the last session of the Legislature and has been in demand by directors of research throughout the nation."²¹ In 1927, the committee devoted its energy to an evaluation of the tobacco tax as a source of revenue to help provide improvement of public-school education in Louisiana.²² In 1928, it presented a report suggesting provision of a State equalization fund.²³ The Executive Council, at a meeting held on November 21, 1928, directed Griffith to suggest to the House of Delegates, in convention the following day in Baton Rouge, that it instruct the Committee on Educational Research to take financing of education as its next problem for study.²⁴

Equalization fund. The Association continued to add

²¹Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 107.

²²"Notes on the House of Delegates," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, V (January, 1928), 7.

²³"The Report of the L. T. A. Committee on Resolutions," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VI (March, 1929), 31.

²⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., pp. 132-33.

its efforts to those applied by the State Department of Education for establishment of a State fund to equalize educational opportunity. In his address to the New Orleans convention in 1927, C. B. Turner, retiring president, declared the Association had taken as a major objective "the equality of educational opportunity for all the children of the state, wherever these children may be."²⁵ In 1928, the Committee on Educational Research decided to study "the need for an equalization fund, the size of such a fund, and a workable plan of distribution."²⁶ The Association took no credit for influencing passage of an Act imposing a tax on malt and dedicating the proceeds to an equalization fund,²⁷ but its journal, in an editorial, declared:

. . . The Governor, the State Superintendent of Education, and the Legislature deserve the highest commendation of the school forces of the state for their

²⁵C. B. Turner, "Annual Address to the Louisiana Teachers' Association," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, V (January, 1928), 23.

²⁶"An Equalizing Fund for Louisiana," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, V (April, 1928), 36.

²⁷"Act No. 4," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Extra Session, 1928 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1928), pp. 7-12.

recent action in dedicating the proceeds of the Malt Tax to an equalizing fund for Louisiana.²⁸

In a resolution adopted at its convention in Baton Rouge in 1928, the Association had urged "provision for an equalization fund along the lines suggested by the report of the Research Committee at this convention."²⁹ With its October issue of 1929, the Association's journal began publishing a series of articles by John M. Foote, head of the division of reference and service in the State Department of Education. It noted that Foote had worked out "the details of an equalization fund which will soon be submitted to the school people for their consideration."³⁰ W. B. Prescott, president of the Association, told Louisiana teachers of the part their organization had played in obtaining approval, at a special session of the Legislature in September, 1930, of a joint resolution proposing an

²⁸"An Equalization Fund for Louisiana," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VI (January, 1929), 33.

²⁹"The Report of the L. T. A. Committee on Resolutions," loc. cit.

³⁰"Equalizing Educational Support and Advantages in Louisiana," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VII (October, 1929), 31.

amendment to Section 14 of Article XII of the Louisiana Constitution.³¹ The amendment, known today as the Hoffpauir Amendment, was approved in State-wide balloting on November 4, 1930, by a vote of 113,040 to 6,659.

Prescott related that he had joined Secretary Griffith and "other school officials of the state in cooperation with Mr. Harris to get this program through the Legislature."³² The Hoffpauir Amendment established a per-educable allotment of twelve dollars and provided that:

. . . As much as two dollars (\$2.00) per educable to be known as a state equalizing fund, shall be applied by the State Board of Education as an equalizing fund to such school boards of education as, in the opinion of the State Board of Education, may need it, for the purpose of securing equal public school facilities in all the parishes of the State.³³

Another joint resolution approved at the Legislature's extra session of 1930 resulted in passage of a constitutional amendment, known now as the Wimberley Amendment, which partially implemented provisions of the

³¹"Act No. 6," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Extra Session, 1930 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1930), pp. 31-33.

³²W. B. Prescott, "The Legislative Program of the Association," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VIII (December, 1930), 4.

³³"Act No. 6," op. cit., p. 32.

Hoffpauir Amendment by providing that proceeds of a tax of one-half cent per gallon of gasoline should be used as a fund for equalizing educational opportunity.³⁴ In the issue of the Association's journal for January, 1931, John M. Foote reviewed a plan for "distributing the newly created State Equalization Fund among the poorer parishes." He said thirty-five parishes would be involved in the distribution of one million dollars annually.³⁵

V. L. Roy's Louisiana Committee

A resolution offered by V. L. Roy at the Baton Rouge convention of 1925 had as its object promotion of "some movement which would stimulate the pupils and teachers of our schools to a deeper interest and appreciation of the resources and possibilities of our state."³⁶ The work of the committee was endorsed by prominent Louisiana citizens,

³⁴"Act No. 1," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Extra Session, 1930 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramirez-Jones Printing Company, 1930), pp. 5-16.

³⁵John M. Foote, "Plan for Distributing the State Equalization Fund of One Million Dollars," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VIII (January, 1931), 6.

³⁶Alma Burke [sic], "The 'Louisiana' Committee," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IV (November, 1926), 43.

including the State's representatives in Congress, and various business leaders. A prize of one thousand dollars, provided by Louisiana firms and individuals, was offered by the committee for "the best treatise on Louisiana." Winner was Mabel Brasher, of Alexandria, whose paper, published in book form as Louisiana: A Study of the State, underwent at least one revision, and was used for a time as a textbook in schools of the State. Terms of the contest stipulated that the copyright would belong to the State teachers' Association and that part of the royalties would go into its treasury. In an article in the school journal of November, 1927, Roy described and terminated the committee's activities.³⁷ The Executive Council voted at a meeting held on April 25, 1931, to increase Miss Brasher's share of royalties from 25 per cent to 50 per cent.³⁸

II. TEACHER-WELFARE DEVELOPMENTS

Three committees with responsibilities directly

³⁷V. L. Roy, "Louisiana Manuscript Contest," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, V (November, 1927), 39-41.

³⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 164.

related to teacher welfare were among the first standing committees created after reorganization of the Association. Acting by direction of the House of Delegates at the Baton Rouge convention in the winter of 1922, B. F. Mitchell, newly elected president, appointed the Committee on Teacher Pensions, the Committee on Compensation, and the Committee on Tenure.³⁹ The matters with which these committees were concerned had long been of vital interest to the teaching profession of Louisiana and were to remain so.

Teacher Retirement

The first of the three committees to present a formal report was the Committee on Teacher Pensions, which had P. C. Rogers as its chairman. In a preliminary report submitted to the Association at its 1923 convention at Alexandria, the committee cited the Iowa State Teachers' Annuity Plan as the system it considered "the most feasible and the most desirable."⁴⁰ In response to this report, the

³⁹"Committees for the Investigation of School Problems," op. cit., pp. 39-40.

⁴⁰"Proceedings of the House of Delegates," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, I (January, 1924), 13-15.

House of Delegates included among its purposes and objectives "for the year 1923-24" a recommendation "that the State Legislature enact a law that will provide a reasonable retirement fund for teachers during their old age."⁴¹ The full report of the committee was published in the journal's issue for March, 1924. Noting that the city of New Orleans already had a retirement system established by law and that the latest Constitution of the State of Louisiana provided that the "Legislature shall provide for a retirement for aged and incapacitated teachers in the state public schools," the report recommended that "the Association arrange for the formulation of a plan for teacher retirement in Louisiana to be endorsed and presented to the Legislature in 1926."⁴²

In his written report to the Executive Council submitted November 18, 1926, Griffith recommended that the Committee on Teacher Retirement be instructed "to prepare a sample teacher retirement act for Louisiana" in order to

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 16-17.

⁴²P. C. Rogers, Jr., "Report of Committee on Teacher Retirement," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, I (March, 1924), 25-26.

crystallize opinion on the subject "so that the Association will know how to write a suitable law and when to request the Legislature to act upon it."⁴³ At a meeting of the Executive Council held on November 20, 1929, a representative of the Acadia Parish Teachers' Association presented a plea for financial aid for superannuated teachers.⁴⁴ The Council "agreed that the amount required for this work was too great to be undertaken by the Association at the time," but before adjourning it earmarked in the Association's budget for 1929-30 the sum of \$2,500 "for the employment of an actuary and to defray other expenses in connection with the preparation of a teacher retirement plan."⁴⁵ A year later, the Council ruled that:

. . . Twenty-five hundred (\$2,500.00) dollars [should] be appropriated out of the receipts for 1930-31 and added to the twenty-five hundred (\$2,500.00) dollars appropriated out of the funds for 1929-30, and set aside in a separate account for the use of the Teacher Retirement Committee in making the necessary investigations .

⁴³Printed pamphlet inserted in Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 75.

⁴⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., pp. 149-50.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 151-52.

for the organization of a teacher retirement system for Louisiana.⁴⁶

In addition, the Council budgeted \$250.00 to pay the expenses of G. O. Houston, chairman of the committee, on a trip to eastern cities for the purpose of consulting with actuaries and directors of teacher-retirement systems before beginning the work in Louisiana. As a result of Houston's journey of investigation, George B. Buck, an actuary with offices in New York City, was employed by the Association early in 1931.⁴⁷ The Association's journal reported:

In the early spring, a contract was entered into with Mr. Buck. This contract is for an approximate sum of \$2,500.00, and his services include the furnishing of the forms for the collection of data, preparation of all basic tables, the recommendation of various types of retirement systems for the study of the Committee, memorandum regarding the cost of detailed benefit provisions, preparation of tables of evaluation, special tables showing provisions that will have to be made on account of accrued liability, tables showing costs of benefits for new entrants, preparation of a report to be made by the Committee, and, finally, the preparation of all legal measures, such as the act itself, to put the plan in operation.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 159-60.

⁴⁷"Teacher Retirement," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (September, 1931), 39.

⁴⁸Ibid.

The systematic campaign to secure a teacher-retirement system for the public-school teachers of Louisiana did not reach fruition during the administration of Griffith, but by the time of his resignation to enter another field of activity most of the basic steps had been completed and final success was only a few years away.

Teacher Job Tenure

In his report to the Executive Council submitted on November 18, 1926, Griffith pointed out that "the standing committee of the Association on tenure has made several studies during the last three or four years and has submitted at least one printed report."⁴⁹ He declared that the "question of teacher turnover" had become so serious a problem that he believed the Association should take a definite stand regarding tenure. Joe Farrar, chairman of the Committee on Tenure, presented a detailed report to the Association's convention at Shreveport in 1924. He advised that ten states had enacted teacher-tenure laws, and the teachers in practically all the other states were seeking

⁴⁹Printed pamphlet inserted in Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 75.

enactment of such laws. Of Louisiana, Farrar's report declared:

The question of teacher tenure is no longer a question of selfish interest to school administrators and bodies of teachers, but a question of protection of the public schools against spoliation by various political groups.⁵⁰

Although the passage of tenure legislation was not pushed as intensively by the Association during that period as were other programs important to teacher welfare, tenure was kept as a focus of attention for those who viewed professional matters at long range. In January, 1927, for instance, the Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association published an article on the problem of teacher tenure written by T. D. Martin, director of the division of records and membership of the National Education Association.⁵¹ In a brief commentary published in December, 1927, the journal of the State teachers' Association of Louisiana linked the problem of teacher tenure with that of tenure

⁵⁰Joe Farrar, "Report of the Committee on the Problem of Tenure," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, II (December, 1924), 48.

⁵¹T. D. Martin, "Teacher Tenure Legislation," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IV (January, 1927), 20-27.

for superintendents, declaring: "Just as tenure for teachers comes with the co-operation of the superintendent, tenure for the superintendent must come through the efforts of teachers."⁵² In his presidential address to the Association's convention at New Orleans in 1927, C. B. Turner declared:

Louisiana always has had an alarmingly high teacher turnover, as is shown by the reports and files in the office of the association. This frequent change of positions among teachers indicates that the subject of tenure should be one of the major objectives of the Louisiana Teachers' Association.⁵³

Teacher tenure was to be linked later with teacher retirement by the Association's leaders, and Louisiana's first State teacher-tenure law was to go on the statute books in the year that saw the establishment of a teacher-retirement system.

Teachers' Salaries

The general problem of teachers' salaries was as pressing during P. H. Griffith's years as executive

⁵²"Tenure of Teachers and Superintendents," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, V (December, 1927), 31.

⁵³Turner, op. cit., p. 22.

secretary of the Association as it had been before the Association's reorganization, and as it has continued to be since. An aspect of the problem which received early attention from the reorganized Association was the inequality prevailing in salary scales maintained according to sex. At the Alexandria convention of 1923, the Association adopted a "proposed platform" which included a commitment to work for "a standard of fairness which recognizes equal remuneration for equal preparation and equal experience, without discrimination of sex."⁵⁴ Passage of a statute requiring school boards to discard sex as a factor in determination of salaries came in 1928. Griffith, in his report to the Executive Council concerning developments in the Association's work during the 1928 session of the Legislature, said:

Mrs. Sarah Towles Reed, representing the High School Association of New Orleans, had Representative Gueymard of Iberville Parish to introduce a bill requiring school boards to pay equal salaries to men and women doing the same type of work and having the same qualifications.⁵⁵

⁵⁴"Proceedings of the House of Delegates," op. cit., p. 16.

⁵⁵Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 124.

According to Griffith, the Association's campaign for passage of this law--Act No. 110 of 1928--was conducted entirely by Mrs. Reed and her committee. Strong opposition which threatened its defeat was overcome by "an amendment to the bill making its operation effective through a series of years."⁵⁶

Meanwhile the position of Louisiana teachers as a group with respect to salaries had deteriorated. In a series of resolutions adopted at the convention in Shreveport in 1924, the Association noted:

. . . While the qualifications of teachers have been rightly raised to their present high standard, yet, at the same time, the purchasing power of the teacher's salary has dropped to the low level of 1913, when salaries were universally conceded to be entirely inadequate.⁵⁷

In a report submitted to the convention at Baton Rouge in 1925, the Association's Committee on Teachers' Salaries noted that a survey conducted in Louisiana

⁵⁶"Act No. 110," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1928 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1928), pp. 126-27.

⁵⁷"Resolutions Adopted by the Louisiana Teachers' Association in Shreveport, November 21st, 1924," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, II (January, 1925), 25.

indicated that "all parishes pay teachers in proportion to their revenues," and suggested that State-wide equalization of educational opportunity was dependent on a "single salary schedule" for the entire State.⁵⁸ While it had found a great difference in salaries paid in rich areas and poor areas, it reported most "parishes use the salary schedule adopted several years past--\$90.00 to \$115.00 per month."⁵⁹ Reports submitted by the standing committee on salaries at the conventions of 1926 and 1927 continued to stress the need for increased State funds to equalize teachers' salaries and to bring the State minimum schedule up to an acceptable level. W. J. Avery, chairman of the committee in 1927, in stressing the great differences in salary practices among the parishes, pointed out that, for male high-school teachers in Louisiana, the highest monthly salary paid was \$306.67, and lowest was \$75.00.⁶⁰ As the various committee reports indicated, the Association was

⁵⁸"Report of Committee on Teachers' Salaries," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (January, 1926), 22.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 21.

⁶⁰"Notes on the House of Delegates," op. cit., p. 8.

convinced that improvement in the salary situation was dependent on provision of additional State tax support for education and upon a State-wide program of equalization of educational opportunity. When plans were made for distribution of equalization funds after the adoption of the constitutional amendments of 1930, salary was the first factor considered in computing costs.⁶¹

III. PROMOTION OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Building professional attitudes and improving the skills and understandings essential to proficient teaching are important in the promotion of professional excellence among public-school teachers. The Association of Louisiana teachers continued to stress both aspects of professionalism after its reorganization in 1922.

Code of Ethics

A Committee on Professional Ethics was among the standing committees appointed by B. F. Mitchell to report to the Association at its convention at Alexandria in 1923.

⁶¹Foote, loc. cit.

C. H. Bean, a member of the faculty of Louisiana State University, was chairman of the committee. In the November issue of the school journal in 1923 was published Bean's recommendation of principles to be incorporated in a code of ethics for an organization of professional teachers. The committee chairman noted that codes of ethics adopted by many other state teachers' associations treated school children as though they were of less importance than teacher obligations to tax-payers, or teacher responsibilities with reference to contracts. He wrote: "It is hoped that the Louisiana Teachers' Association . . . will keep uppermost the child as the only reason for an educational system."⁶² Bean's suggestions were adopted almost verbatim by the Association when it approved an official code of ethics in 1923. This code of ethics and a code adopted by the Association in 1951 have been included in the appendices as Appendix C. The code of 1923 was divided into four sections dealing with teacher responsibilities with reference to (1) pupils, (2) parents, (3) other

⁶²C. H. Bean, "A Code of Ethics for Louisiana Teachers," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, I (November, 1923), 19.

teachers, and (4) the profession.⁶³ Typical statements to be found in the code are:

Teachers should never indulge in remarks with pupils or before classes concerning the peculiarities or shortcomings of other pupils.

.....

Self-respecting teachers will, in their several relations to each other, endeavor to exemplify the "Golden Rule."

.....

All the courtesies common among members of the older professions, and more, should be observed by members of the teaching profession.

.....

Co-operation, loyalty, and sincerity should characterize all relations between supervisory officers and teachers.⁶⁴

Journal of the Association

One of the most effective instruments instituted by the reorganized Association for providing opportunities for a teacher to add to his professional knowledge was the journal. The Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association

⁶³"A Code of Professional Ethics," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IV (December, 1926), 44-47.

⁶⁴Ibid.

was made the responsibility of the Association itself by the new Constitution, which stipulated that each member of the Association should receive a copy.⁶⁵ An announcement in the new journal's first issue revealed some of the plans being made for its future:

It will contain . . . reading material which will be classified in such a way as to be of interest and assistance to all groups of educational workers.

.

The secretary will make an effort to locate the best pieces of work obtainable, which he . . . will pass on to the members of the association through the medium of the journal.⁶⁶

Griffith found his duties as managing editor of the journal arduous. In his report to the Executive Council on November 13, 1926, he said that one "person could well devote his whole time to publishing the Journal."⁶⁷ In his report of August 11, 1925, however, he expressed the opinion that, for the time and effort spent, "the returns

⁶⁵"Constitution," Southern School Work, X (June, 1922), 375.

⁶⁶"Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association," loc. cit.

⁶⁷Printed pamphlet inserted in Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 75.

are probably worthwhile as seen from the figures . . . given that the advertising for last year came within \$355.00 of the Secretary's yearly salary of \$4,000."⁶⁸ In addition to providing news of the Association's activities and of educational developments in the State of Louisiana, the journal regularly published articles calculated to add to the teacher's store of professional information. Reports of the Association's standing committees, as indicated earlier in this study, were published in detail in the journal. Some of these committee reports provided important professional knowledge. An example was the report of the Committee on Tests and Measurements. The first installment of this report appeared in the journal's issue of September, 1925.⁶⁹ Its contents were outlined in a preliminary statement which described three sections:

Section A which states the aims or objectives in primary reading, Section B which sets down minimum requirements for first, second and third grades, and Section C which proposes a systematic follow-up of the accomplishment of the individual pupil.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 36.

⁶⁹E. B. Robert, "Report of L. T. A. Committee on Tests and Measurements," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (September, 1925), 14-18.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 14.

The leading articles in this issue of the journal were generally typical of those appearing in the journal throughout the period of Griffith's administration as executive secretary, and illustrated the effort made to provide useful professional literature. A list of titles included: "The Care and Training of Exceptional Children," by Sophronia Dyer of Louisiana State Normal College;⁷¹ "Supervision of Instruction in Louisiana High Schools," by Charles F. Trudeau, State high-school inspector;⁷² and "Using Point Scores on Objective Tests in Making up Monthly, Semester, and Session Marks," by M. S. Robertson.⁷³

Library Department

The Association undertook a project in 1928 which facilitated enrichment of instructional materials available

⁷¹Sophronia Dyer, "The Care and Training of Exceptional Children," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (September, 1925), 5-9.

⁷²C. F. Trudeau, "Supervision of Instruction in Louisiana High Schools," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (September, 1925), 10-13.

⁷³M. S. Robertson, "Using Point Scores on Objective Tests in Making Up Monthly, Semester, and Session Marks," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (September, 1925), 19-24.

to Louisiana teachers, contributing thereby to improving teaching proficiency. At a meeting held at Alexandria on September 8, 1928, the Executive Council instructed Griffith to visit Columbia, Missouri, and Topeka, Kansas, and "make a careful study of the Reading Circle Department of the State Teachers' Associations of these two states."⁷⁴ At a meeting held on the eve of the 1928 convention in Baton Rouge, the Executive Council, after hearing Griffith's report of his investigation, "approved the organization of a reading circle department and requested Mr. [C. B.] Turner to present the matter to the House of Delegates for consideration by that body."⁷⁵ The House of Delegates approved the plan, which was described in the issue of the Association's journal published in December, 1928:

The plan is to adopt the library list prepared by the State Department of Education, arrange an order blank containing all of these books, and keep them in stock so that orders may be filled on the day on which they are received. This will make it possible for teachers to order any number of books handled by any number of publishers by sending one order to the

⁷⁴ Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit.,
p. 129.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 132.

Louisiana Teachers' Association.⁷⁶

The name of the new department was soon changed to "Library Department." When the Executive Council met in April, 1930, the agency was a going concern. The Library Department was asked to "reimburse the general Association to the amount of \$255.49 for equipment and supplies paid out of Association funds."⁷⁷ Griffith's report about Library Department activity, made in April, 1931, advised that in a year's time "the number of orders . . . increased from \$11,185.51 to \$18,831.18." The Executive Council of the Association immediately voted bonuses to two office assistants for extra work in Library Department operations.⁷⁸

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Expanding activities and interests which went along with organizational growth brought about developments which

⁷⁶"Organization of a Reading Circle Department," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VI (December, 1928), 24-25.

⁷⁷Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 155.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 165.

are characteristic of the histories of most formally constituted interest groups. During P. H. Griffith's time as executive secretary, the Association coped successfully with problems related to membership and financial stability, established policies with respect to relationships with other organizations having similar interests, and sought to perfect an efficient machinery for implementing its aims.

Enlargement of Membership

Enlargement of the membership of the Association was one of Griffith's chief goals, and he took particular pride in progress made in recruiting Louisiana teachers into the ranks of their professional organization. In his report to the Executive Council on August 11, 1925, approximately two years after he assumed the duties of executive secretary, Griffith wrote:

. . . When I took charge in 1923 there was a membership of about five thousand, and there were sixteen parishes on the one hundred per cent membership list. Since then, the total number has gone to seven thousand two hundred, and there are now forty-eight parishes on the one hundred per cent list.⁷⁹

Griffith gave much thought to problems of enlisting

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Ibid., p. 33.

new members and passed his conclusions on to the Executive Council in his reports. Commenting on success experienced in this area of activity during the first two years after reorganization, Griffith said in his formal report:

Increasing membership in the Association depends largely upon two factors: first, the ability of the Secretary to secure the cooperation of the superintendents; and second, the attitude of the superintendents toward the Association.⁸⁰

By convention time in 1925, membership in the Association increased to more than eight thousand, and fifty-six parish school systems enrolled all their teachers in the Association. The entire faculties of the State School for the Blind and three colleges--Louisiana State Normal College, Southwestern Louisiana Institute, and Louisiana College--were represented on the membership roll by the names of every member of their faculties.⁸¹ Among resolutions adopted by the Association at the 1925 convention in Baton Rouge was one which asserted:

. . . We view with satisfaction and professional pride the growth in membership of this association, which now enrolls about 95% of the teachers of the state; and . . . we urge the other 5% of the teachers

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 33-34.

⁸¹Ibid., pp. 43-44.

to enroll as members to the end that we may present a solid and unbroken front in our endeavors on behalf of the children of our state.⁸²

By March, 1928, Griffith had succeeded in improving the Association's contact at the parish level to such an extent that he was able to devote more of his time to other activities which also were important to the Association. In his report to the Executive Council on March 13, Griffith declared that 100 per cent of public-school faculties in every parish with the possible exception of Orleans Parish had enrolled in the Association.⁸³ When Griffith resigned in 1931, the success of his unremitting campaign to enlist teachers as members of the organization was singled out for special citation in a resolution of appreciation adopted by the Executive Council.⁸⁴

Financial Stability

Increase in membership was directly related to the

⁸²"Report of Committee on Resolutions," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (February, 1926), 37.

⁸³Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 101.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 172.

growing financial stability of the Association. The Constitution of 1922 under which the Association was reorganized decreed: "The annual dues of this Association shall be two dollars (\$2), receipt for which shall be issued by the Secretary."⁸⁵ As reflected in budgets adopted from year to year by the Executive Council, receipt of dues payments represented more than one-half of the Association's income, and the annual total received from this source continued to mount and was matched by the increased total of each yearly budget. The budget adopted for fiscal 1924-25 was for a total of \$20,000.⁸⁶ The totals budgeted for 1925-26 and 1926-27 were \$23,400 and \$25,800.⁸⁷ When Griffith submitted his report to the Executive Council in November, 1926, accumulation of a reserve fund was already under way. "Even with the additional burden of legislative work," Griffith told the Executive Council, "at no time during the year did the funds of the association fall below \$11,000." This, he said, had made it possible "to begin

⁸⁵"Constitution," loc. cit.

⁸⁶Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., pp. 18-19..

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 69 and 71.

the accumulation of a small reserve fund."⁸⁸ In a report dated May 7, 1927, Griffith noted: "We now have in bank and Building and Loan Stock a total of \$18,000.00 which is about \$10,000.00 more than we started with four years ago."⁸⁹ In a financial statement for fiscal 1927-28, Griffith informed the Executive Council that the Association had been able to meet, on time, every financial obligation incurred since reorganization. The organization had amassed a reserve fund of "\$24,000.00 in stock and cash."⁹⁰

Headquarters of Association

Following his description of the Association's flourishing financial condition in the financial statement of 1927-28, Griffith advised the Executive Council:

We should now begin to think of plans for securing a permanent home for association headquarters. . . . The building or the acquisition of offices will stand as evidence of permanence and as a guarantee of good faith in all business relations.⁹¹

⁸⁸Printed pamphlet inserted in Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 75.

⁸⁹Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 89.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 103.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 104.

The Executive Council acted promptly on Griffith's proposal. At a meeting held on September 8, 1928, at Alexandria, W. J. Avery, president of the Association, appointed a committee to "investigate the whole matter of organization of property by the Association." Avery, who named C. B. Turner, J. W. Mobley, Elizabeth Taylor, and Violet Smith, was added to the committee by action of the Council.⁹² The committee's recommendation that headquarters property be purchased by the Association, and that an appropriation of funds be made for that purpose, was approved by the Executive Council at a meeting in Baton Rouge on November 21, 1928. The Council directed Turner to present to the House of Delegates, for adoption, a charter prepared by H. H. White of Alexandria.⁹³ The charter was adopted at the 1928 convention in Baton Rouge by the House of Delegates, which also approved "appropriation of \$18,500.00 for the purchase and repair of a building to be used in conducting Association Activities."⁹⁴ The Journal

⁹²Ibid., p. 128.

⁹³Ibid., p. 132.

⁹⁴"Association Owned Headquarters," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VI (December, 1928), 24.

of the Louisiana Teachers' Association commented:

In addition to supplying the necessary facilities, the ownership of property will increase the business man's respect for our profession. Teachers' Associations should acquire property as a part of the plan to make themselves both respected and powerful. The building or the acquisition of offices will stand as evidence of permanence and a guarantee of good faith in all business relations.⁹⁵

At a meeting in November, 1928, following the convention, the Executive Council, by resolution, authorized Amy H. Hinrichs, the Association's newly elected president, to "buy and purchase from the Capitol Building and Loan Association . . . for the sum and price of Fifteen Thousand (\$15,000.00) Dollars cash . . . a certain piece or parcel of ground, together with all the buildings and improvements thereon," with a frontage of thirty-three feet and seven inches on the south side of Florida Street in Baton Rouge.⁹⁶ The Council authorized Griffith to employ an architect and to "proceed otherwise with placing the building in readiness for occupancy at the earliest possible date."⁹⁷ After repairs had been made and the property was

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., pp. 137-38.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 140.

ready to use, a writer in the journal described it to Louisiana teachers:

The first floor above the basement has been converted into three attractive offices and a reception room--all adequately equipped with the necessary desks, chairs, and filing cabinets. A smaller room on the west side of the offices has been equipped with shelving for supplies and such machinery as the mimeograph, addressograph, graphotype, and calculating machine.

Due to the generosity and professional spirit of Miss Ethredge of the Louisiana Normal College, the neutral ground in front of the building has been adorned with appropriate shrubbery. Miss Ethredge, as Chairman of the Kindergarten-Primary Council, donated \$13.71 to beautifying the property in this manner.⁹⁸

Relationships with Other Agencies

One of the first acts of the Executive Council of the Association after reorganization was to vote to defray the expenses of the president and the executive secretary of the Association to the summer meetings of the National Education Association. It voted also to pay convention expenses of the national body's Louisiana director. The Council appropriated four hundred dollars to send its representatives to the convention which was to be held in

⁹⁸"New L. T. A. Property," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VI (March, 1929), 24.

San Francisco the following July.⁹⁹ A Louisiana delegation larger than any previously sent by the State teachers' Association to a meeting of the Department of Superintendence attended the conclave held in Washington, D.C., in February, 1926.¹⁰⁰ W. J. Avery of Rapides Parish was elected chairman of the county (parish) superintendents' section for 1926-27. In 1927, twenty-two Louisiana teachers--seven of them official delegates--attended the national convention at Seattle.¹⁰¹ C. B. Turner, president of the Louisiana teachers' organization, was elected State director for Louisiana and a member of the National Education Association's board of directors.¹⁰² When the national convention was held at Atlanta in 1929, the Association of Louisiana teachers arranged for a special train to

⁹⁹Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁰⁰"Louisianians at the Department of Superintendence," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, III (April, 1926), 16.

¹⁰¹"The N. E. A. Convention at Seattle," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, V (September, 1927), 31.

¹⁰²NEA, Proceedings, 1927, p. 1055.

run from New Orleans to Atlanta.¹⁰³ At an early meeting, the Executive Council authorized Griffith to join the Service Bureau of State Teachers' Associations, an agency of the National Education Association.¹⁰⁴ At its convention in Baton Rouge in 1925, the Louisiana teachers' organization backed the national organization's stand on federal aid to education by endorsing the education bill then before Congress.¹⁰⁵

Another educational group with which the reorganized State teachers' Association formed a lasting relationship early in Griffith's tenure as executive secretary was the Louisiana Parent-Teacher Association. Beginning with the September issue in 1924, the Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association began to carry a department devoted to the activities of the Parent-Teacher Association.¹⁰⁶ This department became a monthly feature in 1928.

¹⁰³"On to Atlanta!" Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VI (May, 1929), 2.

¹⁰⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 75-76.

¹⁰⁶"Parent-Teacher Association," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, II (September, 1924), 41-43.

Mrs. Eleanore H. Meade, president of the Louisiana Parent-Teacher Association, wrote:

This opportunity of keeping our aims before the teachers of the state is profoundly appreciated and we hope to present you something of real value each month.¹⁰⁷

In 1927, after a questionnaire survey of Parent-Teacher Association activity in Louisiana, Griffith asserted:

Parent-Teacher Associations, when properly organized and wisely directed, render a most valuable service to schools. They not only supply, or assist the teachers in supplying, many urgent school needs, but they also act as a connecting link between the teachers and the community. In many communities in the state, the Parent-Teacher Association has been an important factor in creating support for bond issues and other methods of giving aid to school development.¹⁰⁸

Departments and Sections

In its earliest Constitution, the reorganized State teachers' Association provided for creation of departments by action of the House of Delegates, and specifically recognized the existence of four departments which were

¹⁰⁷"Louisiana Parent-Teacher Associations," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VI (November, 1928), 42.

¹⁰⁸"Parent-Teacher Association," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IV (March, 1927), 42.

already functioning--the College and University Department, the High School Department, the Rural School Department, and the Music Department.¹⁰⁹ In his report to the Executive Council in March, 1928, Griffith called attention to the growing popularity of section meetings at conventions of the Association. He wrote:

At the recent meeting in New Orleans, the general meetings were poorly attended, but in spite of the bad weather, several of the rooms in which the sectional meetings were held were too small to accommodate the teachers who wished to attend.¹¹⁰

As listed in the journal of the Association in its December issue of 1928, the departments and sections of the State teachers' organization had increased from the original four to a total of seventeen. These were: the College Department, the High School Department, the Elementary Department, the Kindergarten-Primary Department, the High School English Section, the High School Mathematics Section, the Vocational Guidance Section, the Elementary Geography and History Section, the Elementary Arithmetic Section, the Louisiana Home Economics Association, the

¹⁰⁹"Constitution," loc. cit.

¹¹⁰Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 117.

Agriculture Section, the Classical Section, the Social Science Section, the Modern Foreign Language Section, the Science Section, the Elementary Reading and Language Section, and the Commercial Section.¹¹¹

Constitutional Amendments

In spite of several proposals for changes, the Constitution under which the Association of Louisiana teachers was reorganized was altered very little while Griffith was executive secretary. As early as 1924, the Executive Council advanced a proposal to place the election of officers of the Association in the hands of the House of Delegates.¹¹² The executive secretary was directed to prepare an amendment to the Constitution which would reflect the proposed change.¹¹³ Another amendment sought by the Executive Council in 1924 would have divided the Association into sectional groups for meeting purposes,

¹¹¹"Officers of the Departments and Sections of the Louisiana Teachers' Association for 1928-1929," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VI (December, 1928), 46-47.

¹¹²Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 13.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 15.

doing away with the annual State-wide convention.¹¹⁴

Nothing came of either of these proposals. When the convention met at Alexandria in 1930, on the eve of Griffith's resignation, the Association was electing officers as it had elected them from the date of reorganization. The Constitution still said: "The officers of this Association, except the Executive Secretary, shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Association by majority vote of members present and voting."¹¹⁵ In fact, only two amendments had been added to the Constitution. One provided that the method of selecting convention delegates should be the same for the colleges as for parish units--"one delegate for the first twenty-five (25) members and an additional delegate for each additional twenty-five members or fraction thereof." The other made the elected vice-president a member of the Executive Council.¹¹⁶ A referendum was under way in 1930 to determine whether a

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 17.

¹¹⁵"Constitution and By-Laws of the L. T. A.," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VIII (November, 1930), 17.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 19.

majority of the membership of the Association favored election of delegates for two-year overlapping terms.¹¹⁷ In an action taken without benefit of endorsement by the House of Delegates, the Executive Council authorized the president of the Association "to appoint directors in New Orleans and Shreveport to take care of all matters concerning the L. T. A., including selection of delegates to the annual convention."¹¹⁸

Griffith's resignation. P. H. Griffith resigned as executive secretary of the Association in 1931 to become Director of the University Extension Division at Louisiana State University. An earlier resignation by Griffith, submitted in August, 1925, was withdrawn at the insistence of the Executive Council when it was unable to agree on a successor.¹¹⁹ A summation of accomplishments of the Association during his administration was provided in an

¹¹⁷"Referendum on the Reorganization of the House of Delegates," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, VII (January, 1930), 7.

¹¹⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, op. cit., p. 157.

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 27-29.

expression of appreciation published in the Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association in September, 1931:

Mr. Griffith has been active in Association affairs for many years. He was president during 1921-1922. During his administration, the Association developed its present organization, largely through his efforts. After the reorganization, which provided for a full-time Executive Secretary, the Executive Council prevailed upon him to accept the secretaryship. At this time, the paid membership of the Louisiana Teachers' Association was less than 1,200. When he resigned, its membership was more than 9,000, numbering almost every white public school teacher in the State. Through his efforts, the Association was a powerful factor in the development of Louisiana's educational system. It was an active agency through which public school teachers and officials were able to battle successfully in the Legislature for improved school conditions.¹²⁰

¹²⁰"In Appreciation," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (September, 1931), 7.

CHAPTER IV

ADMINISTRATION OF G. O. HOUSTON, 1931-1937

G. O. Houston, assistant superintendent of schools in Caddo Parish, who was elected in 1931 by the Executive Council to succeed P. H. Griffith as executive secretary, had long been a prominent figure in Louisiana education, and in the affairs of the reorganized Association of Louisiana teachers. An indication of the esteem in which he was held by laymen and teachers associated with him in school work was supplied by the reaction which occurred in DeSoto Parish when he resigned in 1925 to accept an administrative position in Caddo Parish. At a special meeting of the DeSoto Parish School Board--an open meeting attended by many teachers and other citizens who were not school-board members--a full-color, life-size portrait of Houston was unveiled in his honor after several laudatory speeches had been made. It was announced that the portrait would hang on the wall of the board room as a reminder of great progress in public-school education made in DeSoto

Parish during Houston's superintendency.¹ It was in 1925 also that Houston, at the suggestion of State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris, was made chairman of the Publicity Committee of the Louisiana Teachers' Association.² Having appropriated a total of five thousand dollars "for the use of the Teacher Retirement Committee in making the necessary investigations for the organization of a teacher retirement system for Louisiana," the Executive Council voted in November, 1930, to send Houston to Washington, D.C., New York City, and other eastern cities for conferences with actuaries and directors of teacher-retirement systems, and to supply him with money to pay his personal expenses.³ Houston's tenure as executive secretary ended when he died at Shreveport on January 3, 1937.⁴ It was marked by the Association's efforts to cope with its own depression-born financial problems, and to help meet

¹"Mr. G. O. Houston Honored by Friends," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IV (November, 1926), 46.

²Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. I, p. 22.

³Ibid., p. 160.

⁴Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. II, p. 53.

those of the public-school system, as well as by some outstanding achievements in the field of teacher welfare.

I. GENERAL SERVICE TO PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Association continued to coordinate its efforts with those of State Superintendent Harris and the State Department of Education during the depression years, working to prevent the public-school system from collapsing as sources of revenue began to run dry. These efforts, even when successful, did not always result in financial gains for teachers. The Association pooled its strength with that of other agencies in a desperate holding action which enabled the public-school system of Louisiana to survive. This joining in a cooperative campaign, which eventually gained financial succor for the schools, may have been the most important contribution made by the Association to public-school education generally during the Houston period. The Association performed other services, however, which were also important, sometimes in cooperation with other forces and sometimes independently.

Follow-up of White House Conference

By unanimous vote, the Executive Council of the

Association, for reasons of economy, voted in April, 1931, to reduce the length of its 1931 convention at Baton Rouge from three days to two.⁵ Meeting again in August, the Council rescinded this action and extended the convention's length to a full three days--November 12, 13, and 14.⁶ The Council had agreed to combine the convention with a Louisiana conference called as a State-level sequel to President Herbert Hoover's White House Conference on Child Health and Protection. Chairman of the steering committee appointed by the Governor to take the lead in arranging for the conference was P. H. Griffith, former executive secretary of the Association of Louisiana teachers, who said:

It was thought . . . that the members of the Louisiana Teachers' Association would be glad of an opportunity to acquire more information concerning the purposes of the White House Conference and would welcome a deviation from the usual plan of conducting the annual convention by accepting the main program of the White House Conference and holding a joint convention of the two organizations.⁷

The Executive Council voted "that all programs of the

⁵Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 166.

⁶Ibid., p. 176.

⁷P. H. Griffith, "Louisiana Teachers Association and Follow-Up of White House Conference," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (September, 1931), 34.

general and departmental sessions of the 1931 Convention be devoted to the subjects of the White House Conference."⁸

In summing up the 1931 convention, Chairman Griffith declared:

The whole machinery of the teachers' organization was given over to the Conference and the magnificent response of the members is revealed in the registration which was larger by more than five hundred than any previous L. T. A. Convention. In addition to the 2,600 teachers who registered, more than five hundred social workers signed the books.⁹

Among out-of-State speakers who delivered addresses at the 1931 convention of the State teachers' Association were Ray Lyman Wilbur, secretary of the interior in the Hoover cabinet, and William John Cooper, national Commissioner of Education.¹⁰ A resolutions committee representing the follow-up conference presented a report advocating many advancements in the State's educational program, including: (1) increased support of adult education; (2) "appointment

⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 176.

⁹P. H. Griffith, "The Recent Follow-up Conference on Child and Protection," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (December, 1931), 24.

¹⁰"Program," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (November, 1931), 33 and 35.

of a vocational and educational guidance counsellor in every high school in Louisiana"; (3) expanded State library services and facilities; (4) a sixth-grade education or eight years of schooling for every child applying for work; (5) extension of kindergarten education; (6) continuance of the campaign against illiteracy; (7) support for character-building agencies; (8) adequate probation service for juvenile delinquents; (9) establishment of "a Department of Social Welfare Administration at Louisiana State University." The resolutions committee also declared:

We express our appreciation to the Louisiana Teachers' Association and to their able Secretary, Mr. G. O. Houston, for their participation both in the expenses of the conference and in the formation and presentation of the program which would not have been possible on so excellent a scale.¹¹

Citizenship and Character

At a meeting held in Baton Rouge in January, 1934, the Executive Council of the State teachers' Association turned its attention from pressing economic problems of the time long enough to provide for creation of a committee

¹¹"Louisiana Follow-up of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection and the Louisiana Teachers' Association Convention, Report of Resolutions Committee," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (December, 1931), 37-43.

which was to "prepare a course in citizenship, this course to be presented to the State Department of Education with the request that proper academic credit be allowed for such course."¹² Chairman of the committee was J. N. Poche, who requested suggestions from Louisiana teachers as his group began a study of citizenship education on a national basis.¹³ Houston in outlining to the Executive Council what he considered to be a long-range associational program, suggested that Poche's committee "be encouraged to make its report as soon as possible with the view of having adopted by the State Board of Education, a course of study on the subject of Citizenship and Character Training."¹⁴ The committee's report, submitted to the Executive Council in April, 1935, was published in September in the Association's journal.¹⁵ It listed areas of school activity

¹²Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 219.

¹³"Citizenship and Character," Louisiana Schools, XII (October, 1934), 27.

¹⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 244.

¹⁵"Report of the Committee on Citizenship and Character Training," Louisiana Schools, XIII (September, 1935), 37-44.

which might be used for training in citizenship, and suggested specific ways in which these areas might be turned to account. Areas included were: (1) physical resources of the school; (2) social life of the school; (3) the curriculum; (4) ethical environment of the school; (5) school routine; (6) school discipline; (7) extracurricular activities.¹⁶

Educational Research

The Committee on Educational Research of the Association continued to be very active during Houston's period as executive secretary. In a meeting at Baton Rouge in August, 1932, the Executive Council, at the suggestion of State Superintendent T. H. Harris, formally expressed its appreciation to this committee "for the extraordinary service it rendered" in its survey of possible sources of tax revenue to be used for school purposes. The committee, headed by L. S. Rugg, noting that property assessments in Louisiana were declining as the business depression deepened, recommended that the Legislature consider especially for taxing purposes to support the public schools

¹⁶Ibid.

these possible sources: motor oils and greases; gasoline; tobacco; jewelry, perfume, and cosmetics; soft drinks, ice cream, candy, and chewing gum; admission fees to places of amusement and recreation; natural gas; insurance premiums; personal income; inheritances; federal estate-tax collections.¹⁷ In March, 1933, it presented findings after a study "concerning the support, the attendance, length of term, number of children transported, and cost of transportation" in Louisiana schools annually for a twelve-year period.¹⁸ In September, 1933, it presented an exhaustive estimate of the possible yield of a general sales tax of 2 per cent in the State of Louisiana, estimating an annual collection of more than \$2,500,000.¹⁹

In 1935, with J. W. Brouillette as chairman, the Research Committee presented to the Executive Council an

¹⁷"The Research Committee of the Louisiana Teachers' Association," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (May, 1932), 39-40.

¹⁸"Statistical Report by Committee," Louisiana Schools, X (March, 1933), 3-7.

¹⁹"The Sales Tax as a Source of Revenue in Louisiana," Louisiana Schools, XI (September, 1933), 32.

outline of a long-range program of committee activity.²⁰

It proposed to study: (1) "the possibilities of enlarging and intensifying the field of service to childhood";

(2) "the possibilities of rendering directly and indirectly the type of service the Association should render the people"; (3) "the direct service the Association owes the membership."²¹ The report provided the prospectus of

enough research possibilities to keep investigators busy as long as the Association continued to exist. More details concerning the Research Committee's recommendations for a long-range program were provided in a complete report published in Louisiana Schools in September, 1935.²²

Publicity for Education

Long before reorganization in 1922, the Association of Louisiana teachers, with its problems, plans, and aspirations, received wide publicity in the State through newspaper coverage of its conventions. In the early years,

²⁰"A Preliminary Statement of the Work of the Research Committee of the Louisiana Teachers Association," Louisiana Schools, XII (April, 1935), 42-44.

²¹Ibid.

²²"Report of Research Committee," Louisiana Schools, XIII (September, 1935), 5-30.

lecturers sponsored by State teachers' organizations, and institute programs promoted by these organizations and their local affiliates, also carried the message of tax-supported education to the public. Formal publicity committees of the Association were active all along. When the weighty economic problems of public-school education during the depression seemed to threaten the very existence of school systems, the State teachers' Association took steps to bring the situation to the attention of the people of Louisiana by means of publicity planned and directed by its own Publicity Committee. The Executive Council, at a meeting held in January, 1934, in Baton Rouge, instructed Ruby V. Perry, president of the Association, to appoint a Publicity Committee "to be composed of each parish superintendent . . . and that this committee be urged to do everything it can to promote the interests of education. . . ." ²³ Apparently it was decided that a committee including every parish superintendent would be unwieldy. The body was supplemented by a ten-member

²³Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 221.

steering committee headed by H. A. Norton.²⁴ The group was very active in helping promote advancements in school finance and teacher welfare which were soon to come.

School Crisis during the Depression

By the spring of 1932, the public-school system of Louisiana was feeling the full force of the depression. In urging that teachers' salaries be kept commensurate with professional preparation, the Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, in September, 1931, recognized the existence of an economic depression, but termed it temporary.²⁵ By April, the situation seemed critical, with State Superintendent Harris predicting that teachers faced salary reductions as a result of reduced tax collections. "The loss," he said, "will amount to two or three million dollars, and nothing approaching that sum can be saved by retrenchment in expenditures."²⁶ The Legislative Committee,

²⁴"Standing Committees," Louisiana Schools, XII (November, 1934), 22.

²⁵"Children First," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (September, 1931), 17.

²⁶T. H. Harris, "Statement Explaining the Financial Condition of the Public Schools of the State," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (April, 1932), 7.

headed by W. B. Prescott, went into action immediately, calling for conferences of school leaders and members of the Legislature in each of the State's congressional districts. By May, meetings sponsored by the Association were held in New Iberia, Crowley, Alexandria, Monroe, Shreveport, and Baton Rouge, and were attended by "nearly all the members of the Legislature."²⁷ The Legislature was asked to make available twelve dollars for the schooling of each educable child, as provided by the constitutional amendment of 1930. After the legislative session of 1932 ended, the Executive Council formally expressed appreciation to the Legislative Committee "for the splendid service it rendered during the session of the Legislature in May and June, 1932."²⁸ Although it had not provided full implementation of the per-educable provision of the amendment, the Legislature had appropriated \$1,500,000 annually for two years to the schools from the general fund.²⁹ Optimism

²⁷"The Legislative Committee," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (May, 1932), 38.

²⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 190.

²⁹"Act No. 12," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1932 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Ramirez-Jones Printing Company, 1932), p. 80.

about economic prospects for the schools, however, proved unjustified. The situation as it developed by January, 1933, was described by an editorial in Louisiana Schools:

In November of 1932, there was credited to the current school fund of the State some seven hundred sixty-eight thousand dollars in money actually collected from the tax payers of the State. The public schools were also due seven hundred fifty thousand dollars for the six months ending December 31st. from the million and a half dollars appropriated out of the general fund for the public schools. The two items added together make a million five hundred eighteen thousand dollars that should have been distributed in November. Checks were drawn by the State Department of Education during the month of November for the distribution of these funds to the various parishes of the State. To date very few of these checks have been honored.³⁰

State school funds still were not forthcoming when the Executive Council met in Baton Rouge in November, 1933. At the request of Superintendent Harris, the Council addressed letters to the Governor, to the State Treasurer, and to Louisiana's delegation in Congress. The letter to the Governor requested him to call a special session of the Legislature to find "additional sources of taxation" for school purposes, and to increase "for this current school session the public school funds by at least two and a half

³⁰"State School Funds," Louisiana Schools, X (January, 1933), 27.

or three million dollars."³¹ The State Treasurer was urged to pay in full all credits due the public schools "at the earliest possible moment, and at least in part at an even earlier date."³² The letters addressed to Louisiana senators and congressmen asked their support of proposals for federal emergency aid for the nation's public schools.³³ At the 1933 convention in New Orleans, delayed until December because of the bad economic conditions, the Association took as its general theme "the States' and the Nation's obligations to the public school system," noting that the "school boards of the State owe their teachers some two and one-half million dollars in unpaid salaries."³⁴ The Association's Legislative Committee, headed now by W. J. Avery, worked "during the entire year" of 1933 to create legislative sentiment for a change in the tax base for school support. Houston, as editor of Louisiana

³¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 202.

³²Ibid., p. 203.

³³Ibid., p. 205.

³⁴"The Convention," Louisiana Schools, XI (November, 1933), 33.

Schools, warned:

A change from the parish to the State in the financing of the schools is a major operation; it is not easily done, even in good times, but in times of depression and great economic distress it is a serious undertaking and cannot be made easily.³⁵

In a resolution adopted at the 1933 convention, the Association called for adoption by the Legislature of a school-finance plan "that will place the major portion of the burden upon the State government. . . ."³⁶ Combining its efforts with those of the Association's Publicity Committee, the Legislative Committee carried out a vigorous campaign to get public support for any tax reforms which might be expected to benefit public education in Louisiana. W. B. Prescott, chairman of the Legislative Committee again in 1934, described this campaign in his report to the Association. Crediting Superintendent Harris with authorship of the plan for school-tax reform, he said:

This committee feels that the following were some of the things accomplished by all of us at the regular

³⁵"The Legislative Committee," Louisiana Schools, XI (November, 1933), 34-35.

³⁶"Resolutions Passed at the Annual Meeting of the Louisiana Teachers' Association," Louisiana Schools, XI (December, 1933-January, 1934), 14.

session of the Legislature in 1934:

1. Major portion of school support transferred from parishes to the state.
2. Minimum state support required--ten million dollars. May be as much more as Legislature provides.
3. Three-fourths of state support distributed on basis of number of educables; one-fourth used as equalizing fund.
4. State guarantees a minimum educational program to all parishes, including poorest. . . .
5. Parish support of schools: (a) Present three mill constitutional tax. (b) Such special maintenance taxes as may be voted within a maximum of five mills. (c) Other local funds now accruing to schools.
6. Special maintenance taxes now in force: reduced one mill for every eight hundred thousand dollars added to present state school funds; reduction continues until the three mills' point is reached.
7. All special maintenance taxes reduced to parish-wide basis and in future they can be voted only parish-wide.
8. Building bond issues not affected by this legislation.
9. Segregation of school funds.
10. State school funds to be distributed monthly instead of every four months.³⁷

When Prescott made his report, all of the improvements he listed were not absolute, since finalization

³⁷"Report Legislative Committee of the Louisiana Teachers' Association 1934," Louisiana Schools, XII (September, 1934), 14-15.

depended in part on approval of two constitutional amendments which the 1934 Legislature agreed to propose to the people. As Prescott predicted, however, the amendments were passed by large majorities, shifting the major share of responsibility for public-school support from the parishes to the State.^{38 39} A battle for financial support for schools, which began in an atmosphere of near-disaster, ended with a victory described by Superintendent Harris as "the most progressive step ever proposed in our educational system."⁴⁰ At a meeting in November, 1934, the Executive Council voted to present "suitable certificates" to Superintendent Harris, the Governor, members of the Association's Legislative Committee, its president, Ruby V. Perry, and its executive secretary, G. O. Houston.⁴¹

³⁸"Act No. 75," Amendments to the Constitution of the State of Louisiana Adopted at Election Held on November 6, 1934 (published by authority of E. A. Conway, Secretary of State), pp. 15-20.

³⁹"Act No. 76," Amendments to the Constitution of the State of Louisiana Adopted at Election Held on November 6, 1934 (published by authority of E. A. Conway, Secretary of State), pp. 21-24.

⁴⁰"Comments of Superintendent T. H. Harris," Louisiana Schools, XII (October, 1934), 6.

⁴¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 234.

II. TEACHER-WELFARE DEVELOPMENTS

During G. O. Houston's term as executive secretary of the State teachers' Association, two of the most important steps yet taken in Louisiana in the area of teacher welfare were completed. A teacher-retirement system was established and a tenure law for teachers was passed by the Legislature. Both matters had been of long-standing concern to Louisiana teachers. For a while after Houston became executive secretary they were overshadowed by the problems brought on by economic depression.

Teacher Retirement

Houston was instrumental in the preliminary activity which led to the employment of an actuary to make a study of the Louisiana public school system, and to prepare a teacher-retirement law for presentation to the Legislature. In its November issue in 1934, Louisiana Schools noted that the Committee on Teacher Retirement, headed by J. D. Lafleur, was ready to present to the next regular session of the Legislature a teacher-retirement law which had been ready for presentation for four years. It was held back "due to the unusual financial condition and the distress

that existed among the schools of the State in the lack of funds for the actual payment of salaries."⁴² Gathering data upon which formulation of a retirement plan was to be based began in the spring of 1931, when the Committee on Teacher Retirement mailed to the State's 10,917 public-school teachers copies of a personal-information questionnaire. The Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association described George B. Buck, the Association's actuary, as highly pleased when 10,275 of the forms were returned with the requested information written in the blank spaces.⁴³ In December, 1931, the committee announced that it expected preliminary studies to be completed by January.⁴⁴ The committee's complete report was published in the Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association in its issue for April, 1932. This report included the bill which the State teachers' Association proposed to submit to the Legislature

⁴²"Special Tribute to Committees," Louisiana Schools, XII (November, 1934), 40-41.

⁴³"Teacher Retirement," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (September, 1931), 39.

⁴⁴"Report of the Committee on Teacher Retirement," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (December, 1931), 32.

at an appropriate time.⁴⁵ Chairman of the committee which initiated the retirement study and prepared the final report was G. O. Houston, whose committee work was accomplished before he became executive secretary of the Association. Other members of this committee whose labors were to have a far-reaching effect on the economic welfare of retired Louisiana teachers were: J. D. Lafleur, Jennie Roch, L. E. Scally, Mrs. W. B. Eisely, Mary Bains, and J. B. Myers.⁴⁶ In 1935 at the Alexandria convention, which heard Buck deliver one of the principal addresses, the Association passed a resolution triggering a legislative campaign which finally resulted in establishment of a State teacher-retirement system. A resolution of the Department of Classroom Teachers calling for introduction of the teacher-retirement bill at the 1936 session of the Legislature said:

Whereas, A sound retirement system attracts able young people to the profession; increases the

⁴⁵"Proposed Act to Establish Teacher Retirement for Louisiana," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (April, 1932), 22-35.

⁴⁶"Teacher Retirement Committee Report," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (April, 1932), 8.

efficiency of teachers; prevents rapid turnover in the teaching profession; frees school boards from discharging those who have rendered good and valued service; releases teachers from the necessity of continuing in service after their effectiveness has been reduced; increases the dignity of the teaching profession; and

Whereas, The assurance of old-age security is necessary to secure and hold the best type of teacher;

Therefore, the Department of Classroom Teachers

Resolves: 1. That in order to promote efficiency in public education this state should establish a reasonable and actuarially sound retirement system to the support of which the state and/or locality and the teachers contribute.

Resolves: 2. That the Committee on Teacher Retirement be given the co-operation and support of the L. T. A. to the end that it may continue in its work, present the bill and secure its proper legislation during 1936.⁴⁷

Heading the Committee on Teacher Retirement as the 1936 regular session of the Legislature approached was P. C. Rogers. Other members were: J. D. Lafleur, W. B. Nash, T. S. Cooley, J. D. Russell, Jr., J. B. Myers, Robert Gahn, T. L. Johnson, G. L. McIlwain, and Jennie Roch.⁴⁸

⁴⁷"Resolutions Passed at Convention," Louisiana Schools, XIII (December, 1935-January, 1936), 19.

⁴⁸"L. T. A. Legislative Program," Louisiana Schools, XIII (May, 1936), 10.

The Teacher Retirement Act (Act No. 83 of 1936)⁴⁹ was the result of a bill introduced into the House of Representatives by L. E. Frazar--school principal, member of the Executive Council of the State teachers' Association, legislator, and vice-chairman of the education committee of the House of Representatives.⁵⁰ The Act was voluminous and high technical. It filled twenty-five pages of the official published record of Acts passed at the regular session of 1936. The section on definitions alone occupied more than two pages. It helped provide Louisiana teachers with an assurance of future financial security many of them had not had before. First secretary-treasurer of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana was P. C. Rogers, who left the principalship of the high school at Homer to accept the position.⁵¹ Members of the original board of trustees of the Teachers' Retirement System of

⁴⁹"Act No. 83," Acts of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1936 (published by authority of the State), pp. 216-40.

⁵⁰"Author of Retirement Law Makes Record as Legislator," Louisiana Schools, XIV (September, 1936), 7.

⁵¹"P. C. Rogers to Head Retirement System of Louisiana Teachers," Louisiana Schools, XIV (September, 1936), 6.

Louisiana were: T. H. Harris, State Superintendent of Public Education, ex officio; E. A. Conway, Secretary of State, ex officio; A. P. Tugwell, State Treasurer, ex officio; G. O. Houston, executive secretary of the State teachers' Association, ex officio; J. D. Lafleur, principal of Ville Platte High School; Lionel J. Bourgeois, principal of Warren Easton High School, New Orleans; and E. W. Jones, superintendent of schools of Caddo Parish.⁵²

P. C. Rogers recalled that the Retirement System established its first office in the headquarters building of the State teachers' Association, located at that time on Florida Street. Assisting Rogers in the early days were only two full-time assistants--Gertrude Fridge, secretary-bookkeeper, and L. A. Campbell, general assistant and operator of office machines. Two students at Louisiana State University were employed as part-time helpers.⁵³

Tenure Law for Teachers

Job protection, as essential to individual security as assurance of adequate income after retirement, was a

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Interview with P. C. Rogers, January 24, 1968.

continuing matter of concern to teachers in Louisiana. It was one of the principal goals of the short-lived Louisiana Professional Teachers' League which rose up within the ranks of the State teachers' Association shortly before reorganization in 1922. The Association's journal was editorializing as early as 1905 about the desirability of assured job tenure and other protective provisions for teachers.⁵⁴ Interest in this aspect of security among Louisiana teachers, in fact, was far older than the Association. While Houston was executive secretary, an organized campaign for a State tenure law culminated in success through an Act passed at the same session of the Legislature that witnessed establishment of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.

In 1932, Irving P. Foote, a member of the faculty of Louisiana State University, made a study of faculty turnover among principals and teachers of Louisiana high schools. His findings, published in Louisiana Schools, revealed that neither principals nor teachers were staying

⁵⁴Editorial, Louisiana School Review, XII (June, 1905), 16.

long in one school system, and listed reasons given by individuals for making changes:

Net turnover of principals in 1930-31 was 8.24 per cent; of men and women [teachers], respectively, 24.87 and 24.60 per cent.

.

On the basis of frequency of mention, reasons given by teachers for changing positions are, in order from high to low: economic, professional, personal and social, and political.⁵⁵

In 1933, the Association's Committee on Tenure, headed by Ruby V. Perry, presented to the convention in New Orleans a comprehensive report which linked job tenure to successful operation of any teacher-retirement system which might be devised. This report declared:

If the teacher is in a system where she is assured of continuous employment during the period of her efficiency, she will value the retirement system. If she is in a system where teachers are dropped without reason, or because of political affiliations, or on account of prejudice, religious or otherwise, then the retirement system is of little value to the average teacher because even though the system is there, she has no assurance that she will be allowed to benefit from it.⁵⁶

⁵⁵Irving P. Foote, "Tenure of High School Teachers in Louisiana," Louisiana Schools, X (October, 1932), 56.

⁵⁶"Report of Tenure Committee," Louisiana Schools, XI (February, 1934), 29.

The committee drew up and caused to be submitted to the Legislature at the regular session of 1934 "a bill providing for tenure for the teachers outside the City of New Orleans."⁵⁷ The defeat of the bill was attributed to a lack of breadth in its provisions, and to a lack of understanding of the principle of job tenure among the people of the State. "It is true, however," said Louisiana Schools, "that the work of the committee put tenure on its feet and has made it a live question before the people of the State."⁵⁸ At a meeting in August, 1934, the Executive Council instructed Ruby V. Perry, now president of the Association, to appoint a special committee to bring to the attention of "the teachers, the school boards, and the public the underlying principles that have been followed all the years in the employment of teachers in the state."⁵⁹ At the convention in Alexandria in 1935, the Department of Classroom Teachers adopted a resolution which said:

Whereas, Teacher tenure during efficiency after the probationary period is essential to attract and hold

⁵⁷"Special Tribute to Committees," op. cit., p. 39.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 229.

the ablest, most courageous, and most socially-minded members of our profession; and,

Whereas, Without such tenure our schools will be manned by teachers under the control and domination of extra-mural influences; and,

Whereas, Such fear militates against teaching efficiency and the development of courageous, critical, tolerant, and socially-minded citizens;

Therefore, the Department of Classroom Teachers resolves to recommend to the Louisiana Teachers' Association that tenure be made the central theme of its 1935-1936 program.⁶⁰

A copy of a tenure bill which was to be presented to the Louisiana Legislature at its regular session in 1936 appeared in the May issue of Louisiana Schools that year. The Act provided for "a probationary period of service, permanent employment, and a specific method for discharge."⁶¹ The Teacher Tenure Act (Act No. 58 of 1936)⁶² resulted from passage of a bill introduced into the House of Representatives by C. A. Riddle, of Avoyelles Parish, a

⁶⁰"Resolutions Passed at Convention," loc. cit.

⁶¹"Proposed Tenure Bill," Louisiana Schools, XIII (May, 1936), 11.

⁶²"Act No. 58," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1936 (published by authority of the State), pp. 182-83.

former teacher and school principal.⁶³ It has undergone little change since its passage.

Amendment of School Law

Another goal of the State teachers' Association at the 1936 regular session of the Legislature was elimination of certain provisions which were added to the school law in 1934 and 1935 to make appointment of all public-school teachers in the State subject to approval by the State Budget Committee. As amended and re-enacted at the third extraordinary session of the Legislature in 1934, Section 20 of the school law of 1922 said in part:

The [parish school] board shall have authority to employ teachers on the nomination of the Parish Superintendent by the month or by the year, and to fix the salaries of the teachers, with the approval of the . . . State Budget Committee.⁶⁴

To this provision the third extraordinary session of the Legislature of 1935 added stipulations even more

⁶³"C. A. Riddle Ex-Schoolman Befriends State Education," Louisiana Schools, XIV (September, 1936), 9.

⁶⁴"Act No. 17," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Third Extraordinary Session, 1934 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Issued by E. A. Conway, Secretary of State), p. 123.

restrictive of the autonomy of parish school boards. They decreed:

That in order to comply with the provisions of this Section the respective Parish School Boards shall prepare and transmit to the State Budget Committee not sooner than the first day of July of each year a list containing the names of any and all teachers proposed to be employed by said Board and the salaries which it proposes to pay to each of said teachers; provided, that for the school year 1935-1936 the said list shall be furnished to the State Budget Committee within thirty (30) days after this Act takes effect. That said Budget Committee shall indicate its approval or disapproval in whole or in part within fifteen (15) days from the receipt of such list. In case the said State Budget Committee shall disapprove of the same it shall inform the said Parish School Board of the objections which it has to the list and salaries as submitted and said Budget Committee may suggest such changes as it may desire. Within ten (10) days from the said action the said Parish School Board shall reform and submit to the State Budget Committee such modified and reformed list containing names of teachers and salaries to be paid to them as it may consider proper under the circumstances and within five (5) days from the receipt of same said Budget Committee shall either approve the same or else shall make such modifications and changes in said list and salaries as it may deem necessary.

Provided, that said Budget Committee may at any time, or as emergencies may require, revise or amend, in whole or in part or as to any item, the budget of any parish school board, submitted to it as required by Section 27 of this Act as amended; and that said Budget Committee may at any time strike the name of any person from any such list and make substitution of any other qualified person or persons therefor, in its discretion, and any such person thus substituted shall be employed

by the Parish School Board.⁶⁵

The threat of a spoils system in the public school system on a State-wide basis seemed to be posed by the changes. The State Budget Committee--comprised of the Governor, the State Superintendent of Public Education, and the State Treasurer--had suspended the objectionable provisions. As long, however, as the law remained unchanged, the threat continued to exist. The State teachers' Association at its convention in Alexandria in 1935 endorsed a resolution urging its Legislative Committee to work for repeal. The resolution, presented by the Department of Classroom Teachers, said:

Whereas, The State Budget Committee realizing the "politicalization" features of the law affecting the public school system of Louisiana recently enacted has temporarily effected a suspension of the provisions of the law giving that body control over the personnel of the school system, and

Whereas, The Parent-Teacher organization of this state has announced its intention to work for the repeal of this law, and

Whereas, The schools of Louisiana have for many years enjoyed freedom from politics and grown to a

⁶⁵"Act No. 10," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Third Extraordinary Session, 1935 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Issued by E. A. Conway, Secretary of State), pp. 29-32.

progressive and happy educational system because of the position enjoyed,

Therefore, the Department of Classroom Teachers

Resolves: 1. To urge the Legislative Committee of the L. T. A. to work to the end that this law be repealed.

Resolves: 2. To offer the assistance and co-operation of this Department in any work the Legislative Committee sees fit to undertake to accomplish this end.⁶⁶

The Executive Council, meeting on the eve of the regular session of the Legislature in 1936, added emphasis to the Association's stand. It unanimously approved a resolution endorsing the Legislative Committee's proposal to change

. . . the Budget law that has to do with employment of teachers, and the substitution therefor of a sane, sensible plan for the employment of teachers that will leave the control of teachers in the hands of local authorities. . . .⁶⁷

A legislator from Avoyelles Parish introduced the legislation which made changes sought by the Association and other agencies. S. Allen Bordelon introduced House Bill No. 26 which resulted in Act No. 59, which dealt with

⁶⁶"Resolutions Passed at Convention," loc. cit.

⁶⁷Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 24.

the problem of the objectionable provisions by deleting them.⁶⁸

The September issue of Louisiana Schools in 1936 was an issue of jubilation. The journal summed up the 1936 record of legislative accomplishment:

All three of these laws [the tenure law, the retirement law, and repeal of the objectionable provisions of the school law] were passed. The passage of one of them would have been enough to shout about in any one legislative session, but the passage of all three is a remarkable achievement.⁶⁹

Looking Ahead

Other problems related to the economic status of Louisiana teachers attracted the attention of their State Association. For example, the Executive Council, at a meeting in April, 1935, instructed L. P. Terrebonne, the Association's president, to call the attention of the State Superintendent of Public Education to the procedure of "requiring teachers to pay substitutes in case of illness and unavoidable absence from school," and to request a more

⁶⁸"Act No. 59," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1936 (published by authority of the State), pp. 183-86.

⁶⁹"Spencer Phillips," Louisiana Schools, XIV (September, 1936), 5.

equitable plan.⁷⁰ In November, 1936, the Executive Council heard R. L. Seegers, supervisor of schools in Lincoln Parish, discuss the question of hospitalization for teachers and voted to have a special committee created to study the matter and report back to the House of Delegates in 1937.⁷¹ It also moved at that meeting to ask the House of Delegates to establish a committee to study the question of credit unions for teachers and to prepare a report for presentation in 1937.⁷²

III. PROMOTION OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

While its more conspicuous activities and the developments to which they led, with G. O. Houston as executive secretary, were in battles waged and victories attained for survival of the public schools, and for the professional dignity stemming from job security and a retirement system, the State teachers' Association did not

⁷⁰Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 43-44.

⁷²Ibid., p. 44.

lose its concern about professional competence.

Departmental and Sectional Activity

Solidarity of teachers in specific subject-matter areas grew stronger during Houston's administration as executive secretary. This development was not confined to specialists in any particular field of knowledge, but the Social Science Department of the Association may be taken as an example. This department of the Association began holding conferences separate from the regular annual conventions of the parent organization because of the need "felt by the group . . . for discussion and social contact more often than that afforded by the annual meetings of the Louisiana Teachers' Association."⁷³ In October, 1931, the journal of the Association was for the month placed in charge of the social-science teachers, who produced an issue devoted to articles written about curriculum problems, teaching methods, and subject matter peculiar to the field of social studies. There were few issues of the journal during the Houston period which did not contain one

⁷³"The Social Science Department," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (October, 1931), 5.

or more articles by Louisiana teachers of social-science subject matter.

The Department of Classroom Teachers of the State teachers' Association, organized in 1934, had promotion of professional excellence among its aims. In commenting on this development in an editorial, Houston said: "This department . . . will do its part in promoting the idea of high qualifications for entrance into the teaching profession."⁷⁴

Journal of the Association

The Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, which became Louisiana Schools with the September issue of 1932, continued to offer many articles of practical value to teachers in search of improved methods. A service performed in this area by the periodical was its full coverage of a curriculum study which began at Louisiana State University in cooperation with the State Department of Education in the summer of 1936. This coverage began in the last year of Houston's tenure as executive secretary. An article by Murphy P. Rogers--"The Teacher in the Curriculum--

⁷⁴"Classroom Teachers," Louisiana Schools, XII (November, 1934), 42.

Study Program"--launched it.⁷⁵ It continued into the period of Houston's successor, emphasizing the importance of curriculum study to the quality of teaching.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

A number of organizational developments occurred in the State teachers' Association during Houston's term, a time of great economic distress for society generally, and a period of innovation in the field of Louisiana educational laws. A campaign for the election of a Louisiana teacher as president of the National Education Association began while Houston was executive secretary, but did not reach its goal until after Houston's death.

Membership and Finance

Despite financial difficulties which began to make themselves increasingly felt in Louisiana as the business depression deepened, membership in the State teachers' Association continued to grow. In his address to the convention at Baton Rouge in 1931, Jack Hayes, the

⁷⁵Murphy P. Rogers, "The Teacher in the Curriculum-Study Program," Louisiana Schools, XIV (October, 1936), 5, 21-22.

Association's president, declared that the number of the Association's members had risen to "approximately 10,000."⁷⁶ In 1932, three thousand members attended the convention in Monroe, setting an attendance record in "a year in which even the larger parishes are unable to meet fully their payrolls."⁷⁷ Attendance at the 1934 convention at Baton Rouge broke all records, with more than 4,500 persons in attendance. As school conditions in Louisiana deteriorated financially, interest of Louisiana teachers in their State organization increased.⁷⁸

The Association's own financial position began to be affected by the depression. At the suggestion of State Superintendent T. H. Harris, the Executive Council, at a meeting in August, 1932, voted to reduce Association dues from two dollars to one dollar and fifty cents.⁷⁹ The Council expressed the opinion that, though "the amount of

⁷⁶Jack Hayes, "President's Address," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (December, 1931), 5.

⁷⁷"Convention," Louisiana Schools, X (December, 1932), 32.

⁷⁸"The Annual Convention," Louisiana Schools, XII (December, 1934-January, 1935), 28.

⁷⁹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 189.

the dues is fixed by the Constitution," the reduction, as an emergency measure, would "meet with hearty approval."⁸⁰ At the same meeting, the Council voted to reduce from forty dollars to thirty dollars the amount of rent charged the Knights of Pythias monthly for use of the third floor of the Association's headquarters building on Florida Street.⁸¹ In spite of these developments the net worth of the Association continued for a time to increase, showing a net gain of \$3,291.79 for the fiscal year ending with August, 1932. Growing at an average annual rate of \$2,919.00 since 1925, the Association's net worth stood at \$34,667.10.⁸² So desperate, however, had conditions become by 1933 that the Executive Council reached a decision not to hold a convention that year, but reconsidered and called a delayed meeting at New Orleans in December after hearing a "committee of Principals from Tangipahoa Parish" urge in late November "that an early meeting of the Association be

⁸⁰"Membership Dues," Louisiana Schools, X (September, 1932), 38.

⁸¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 188.

⁸²Ibid., p. 194.

held."⁸³ The Council again reduced the rent of its third-floor space in November, 1933. And, for the first time since reorganization, the Association's financial report showed an operating loss for the fiscal year ending August 31, 1933.⁸⁴ A bright spot in the financial picture pointed to by Houston was the book store operated by the Library Department. "While we have lost . . . in the Association," he said, "we have gained more than the net loss back in the profits of the book store."⁸⁵

House of Delegates

Early in Houston's period as executive secretary, a committee appointed to study reorganization of the House of Delegates made its report to the Executive Council.⁸⁶ At its 1931 convention in Baton Rouge, the Association adopted the proposed amendment. The major new provisions included in the amendment provided: (1) that a new method of

⁸³Ibid., pp. 199-200.

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 211-16.

⁸⁵Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 20.

⁸⁶Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 179.

apportioning delegates among parish and college organizations be employed, a method which would result in a reduction of the number of delegates allotted to the more populous parishes; (2) that for each delegate elected a first and a second alternate should also be elected; (3) that mileage should be paid, one way, to each delegate actually attending a convention; and (4) that delegates should be elected by each local organization for two-year overlapping terms.⁸⁷ This amendment was incorporated among the provisions of the Association's Constitution when a rewritten form of that document was adopted by the Association in 1934.⁸⁸

Louisiana Schools

During Houston's time as executive secretary, the Association's official journal was given a new name--Louisiana Schools. This designation apparently met with wide approval, for Houston wrote that he was "very grateful for the many fine compliments that [had] reached his desk" since appearance of the September issue of 1932, which was

⁸⁷"Important Change in the Constitution," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, IX (December, 1931), 22.

⁸⁸"The New Constitution," Louisiana Schools, XII (April, 1935), 48.

the first to bear the new name.⁸⁹ In January, 1935, the Executive Council ruled that the minutes of its meetings henceforth should be published regularly in the journal. It provided also that statements of receipts and disbursements by the headquarters office should be published in Louisiana Schools.⁹⁰

Relationships with National Education Association

The State Association of Louisiana teachers continued to send official delegates to conventions of the National Education Association. By 1935, every official delegate was being provided with an expense account. In the early years after reorganization only expenses of the president, the executive secretary, and the National Education Association's director for Louisiana had been paid. Louisianians began receiving increasing recognition from the national organization. W. L. Colvin, principal of Jeanerette High School, was named a vice-president for the

⁸⁹"Thanks!" Louisiana Schools, X (October, 1932), 16.

⁹⁰Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 241.

1936-37 period.⁹¹ In November, 1936, the Executive Council voted to donate five hundred dollars to the Orleans Parish School Board to help pay the cost of entertaining the Department of Superintendence, which met in New Orleans in February, 1937. It was at this New Orleans convention that the Department of Superintendence voted to change its name to "American Association of School Administrators, a Department of the National Education Association," the title it bears today.⁹²

At its meeting of November 18, 1936, the Executive Council also passed a resolution expressing its intention to sponsor the candidacy of Amy H. Hinrichs of New Orleans for the presidency of the National Education Association. Miss Hinrichs, who was elected president of the Louisiana Association in 1928, and had been a vice-president of the national body in 1930 and chairman of its resolutions committee for 1935-36,⁹³ was not successful in her first bid for the presidency, although she received 46.2 per cent of

⁹¹NEA, Proceedings, 1937, p. 702.

⁹²Ibid., p. 447.

⁹³Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

the votes cast at the 1937 convention in Detroit.⁹⁴ The momentum of the campaign which began in her behalf during Houston's administration, however, gathered strength and resulted in victory in a later election.

Departments and Sections

Departments and sections of the Association of Louisiana teachers increased in number to thirty-two by 1936. The program of the convention at Monroe that year listed these special-interest subdivisions of the Association: Art Education Department; Department of Classroom Teachers; College Department; Department of Creative and Productive Work; Department of Deans of Women; Elementary School Department; Louisiana Health and Physical Education Association; High School Department; Louisiana Home Economics Association; Industrial Arts Department; Louisiana Music Education Association; Department of Louisiana Parent-Teacher Association; Department of Psychology; Social Science Department; Department of Superintendents; Department of Vocational Guidance; Agricultural Section; Classical

⁹⁴Violet O'Reilly, "Louisiana Again in Educational Spotlight," Louisiana Schools, XV (September, 1937), 9.

Section; Commerce Section; Elementary Arithmetic Section; Elementary Geography and History Section; Elementary Principals Section; Elementary Reading and Language Section; High School English Section; High School Mathematics Section; Journalism Section; Library Section; Section of Mental Hygiene; Modern Language Section; Science Section; Kindergarten-Primary Department; and Speech Section.⁹⁵

Department of Classroom Teachers

The Department of Classroom Teachers was created by the State teachers' Association at its convention in New Orleans in 1933.⁹⁶ The department was formally organized at the Baton Rouge convention of 1934, adopting as its aims:

To encourage higher qualifications for entrance into the teaching profession.

To promote teacher participation in school management.

To aid in securing adequate salaries, sound retirement systems, tenure, and other improvement in

⁹⁵"Convention Program," Louisiana Schools, XIV (November, 1936), 6-24.

⁹⁶"Classroom Teachers," loc. cit.

conditions as will enable teachers properly to function as a vital factor in educational progress.

To promote, encourage, and assist organizations of classroom teachers and to promote cooperation among such organizations and the members thereof.

To cooperate with parent-teacher associations and other civic bodies having educational objectives, in order to secure better community understanding and appreciation of the problems and the value of the public schools.⁹⁷

At the convention of the Association at Alexandria in November, 1935, the Department of Classroom Teachers presented eight resolutions for consideration. All eight were adopted by the convention. They called for (1) organization of local classroom teachers' organizations, (2) cooperation with other educational agencies, (3) repeal of objectionable provisions of the amended school law, (4) a teacher tenure law, (5) a retirement system, (6) restoration of teachers' salaries, (7) a stand against increasing teacher loads "as a means of retrenchment in the cost of education," and (8) scheduling departmental and section meetings in such a way that conflicts would be avoided.⁹⁸

⁹⁷"The Classroom Teacher's Department," Louisiana Schools, XIII (October, 1935), 44.

⁹⁸"Resolutions Passed at Convention," op. cit., pp. 18-20.

Tercentenary of American High School

In the 1934-35 school session, the Association joined other agencies in the State in celebrating the tercentenary of the American high school. Acting through its Executive Council, the Association endorsed the celebration and offered its cooperation to Charles F. Trudeau, State supervisor of high schools and tercentenary chairman for Louisiana.⁹⁹ The February issue of Louisiana Schools was dedicated in 1935 to the tercentenary celebration.¹⁰⁰

Honorary Presidents

The Executive Council revived the practice of naming honorary presidents at its meeting on November 18, 1936. The Council voted to make State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris an honorary president and a life member of the State teachers' Association, because of "the long service that . . . Harris has rendered education in the State," and because that service "is of such a distinct

⁹⁹"Congratulatory Messages Received by Mr. Charles F. Trudeau," Louisiana Schools, XII (February, 1935), 14.

¹⁰⁰"Tercentenary of Secondary Education," Louisiana Schools, XII (February, 1935), 8.

character and so worthy. . . ." At the same meeting, it voted to confer these honors also on T. O. Brown, superintendent of education in Ouachita Parish.¹⁰¹ The names of Harris and Brown headed the list of the Association's officers printed on the page containing the table of contents of the February, 1937, issue of Louisiana Schools.

Death of G. O. Houston

When G. O. Houston died at Shreveport on January 3, 1937, the Executive Council dedicated the February issue of Louisiana Schools to his memory. In a statement of regret, State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris noted that the "secretaryship of the Louisiana Teachers' Association is a highly important position--next in importance perhaps to that of the state superintendency."¹⁰² At a meeting held on January 9, 1937, the Executive Council elected Spencer Phillips to succeed Houston, and to serve out Houston's unexpired term, scheduled to end November 30,

¹⁰¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

¹⁰²"A Few Expressions from Friends upon the Death of the Late Mr. G. O. Houston, Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Teachers Association," Louisiana Schools, XIV (February, 1937), 5.

1939.¹⁰³ Phillips, who came to the position from the post of principal of Pelican High School, had been president of the Association of Louisiana teachers during the 1936 regular session of the Legislature when the teacher-retirement law and the tenure law were enacted.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 56.

¹⁰⁴"Spencer Phillips," loc. cit.

CHAPTER V

ADMINISTRATION OF SPENCER PHILLIPS, 1937-1939

The administration of Spencer Phillips as executive secretary of the Association of Louisiana teachers was short as compared with those of his two predecessors in the office. His administration was not marked by spectacular developments in school legislation as were the tenures of P. H. Griffith and G. O. Houston. It was a period notable for the defense and solidification of legislative advancements already made; for the beginnings of campaigns for benefits which were to be realized later; for improvement of the Association's organizational structure; and for increasing prominence of Louisiana teachers in the affairs of the National Education Association.

I. GENERAL SERVICE TO PUBLIC EDUCATION

As in earlier periods, much of the effort put forth by the Association in the legislative arena during the Phillips administration was designed for the benefit of the State's educational system as a whole. This effort was

applied both at the State and national levels. Not always successful, it nevertheless served to help keep vital educational problems alive in the consciousness of both the teaching profession and the public at large.

Federal Aid for Education

The State teachers' Association sent an official delegation to Washington to appear on February 15, 1937, before the Senate committee on education and labor in behalf of the Harrison-Black-Fletcher Bill. Heading the delegation was Spencer Phillips and L. E. Frazar, president of the Association.¹ Another delegation appeared on March 30, 1937, in support of the bill, which, according to Louisiana Schools, had attracted the support of the entire Louisiana delegation in Congress.² The bill failed to pass, but the Association renewed its support of federal aid to education when resolutions were adopted at the Shreveport convention of 1937. It urged that the National Youth Administration be made permanent, and called for

¹"The Harrison-Black-Fletcher Bill," Louisiana Schools, XIV (March, 1937), 6.

²"Harrison-Black-Fletcher Bill," Louisiana Schools, XIV (May, 1937), 16.

continuation indefinitely of the "program of education carried on by the State Department of Education and the Division of Education of the Works Progress Administration" because of the cooperative work being done in education of adults and pre-school children.³ With reference to the National Youth Administration, a similar resolution was adopted by the Baton Rouge convention of 1938.⁴ Interest in federal aid for education was old among Louisiana teachers.

Twelfth Grade for Public Schools

The State teachers' Association, through its Executive Council, added its influence to that of other educational agencies which began to bring pressure to bear for addition of a twelfth grade to the Louisiana public-school program. The Council voted on December 31, 1937, for appointment of a committee to cooperate with "the State Department of Education and the Parent-Teacher Association to settle the matter of adding an additional year to the

³"Report of the Resolutions Committee," Louisiana Schools, XV (December, 1937), 6.

⁴"Report of the Resolutions Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVI (December, 1938), 23.

Louisiana public school course."⁵

Selection of Superintendents

The Association joined other agencies in battle against another attempt to make the position of parish superintendent of education elective. The convention at Shreveport in 1937 unanimously adopted a resolution presented by Phillips which said in part:

Whereas, The present method of selecting parish superintendents has been successful in furnishing an able and competent group of such officials,

Be It Resolved, That the Louisiana Teachers' Association oppose any change in the method of selecting parish superintendents.⁶

The bill which the Association anticipated for the 1938 regular session of the Legislature was duly introduced and beaten. The organization's Legislative Committee helped bring defeat also at the 1938 legislative session to a bill which "would have done away with overlapping terms of parish school board members."⁷

⁵Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. II, pp. 71-72.

⁶"Resolutions," Louisiana Schools, XV (December, 1937), 8.

⁷"Report of the Legislative Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVI (September, 1938), 15.

Diversion of Severance Tax

As S. M. Shows, chairman of the 1938 Legislative Committee of the Association of Louisiana teachers, remarked in making his report, the task at the regular legislative session of 1938 was "primarily that of combatting unfavorable legislation."⁸ The fight to prevent diversion of severance-tax funds from the public schools was unsuccessful, according to Shows, although he felt that the battle put up by the Association would "make it unlikely that future legislatures will be apt to attempt to take Severance Tax Funds for any other purpose than public school support." He said that the diversion in the 1938-39 fiscal year would "exceed those of the previous year by \$1,306,000," and that an additional \$756,000 would be diverted in the 1939-40 period. "It seems probable," he warned, "that unless the school forces are prepared to defend this fund at the next session of the Legislature, it will be raided again."⁹ The Executive Council, at a meeting held on May 13, 1939, passed a resolution reaffirming

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

the Association's stand against diversion of severance-tax funds from the public schools.¹⁰ In recognition of the importance of legislative developments to the well-being of the public schools, the Council "authorized the preparation of a luncheon for the Education Committees of the House and Senate and state officials, during the early days of the Legislature."¹¹

Radio Publicity for Public Schools

The State teachers' Association, through its Publicity Committee, began sponsoring radio broadcasts to publicize the public schools in the spring of 1936. By April, 1938, radio stations in Shreveport, Baton Rouge, Alexandria, Lafayette, and Lake Charles were participating. Mrs. Alice Edwards of Shreveport was in charge of the radio activities of the Publicity Committee.¹² When Mrs. Edwards found it impossible to continue as director, in May, 1939, the Executive Council ordered that a committee be appointed

¹⁰Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 112.

¹¹Ibid., p. 89.

¹²Alice Edwards, "Radio Work in Louisiana Schools," Louisiana Schools, XV (April, 1938), 13 and 30.

"to work out a radio program, if possible, for the entire state."¹³

II. TEACHER-WELFARE DEVELOPMENTS

It was not long after passage of the laws establishing job tenure for teachers, and creating the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, before both of these teacher-welfare achievements were threatened by lack of compliance and by adverse legislation. During the administration of Spencer Phillips the major accomplishment of the State teachers' Association in the area of teacher welfare was the mounting of a successful defense against attempts to weaken or destroy what already had been achieved.

Defense of Tenure

Hearing at a meeting held in July, 1937, of the recent dismissal of teachers, the Executive Council of the State teachers' Association responded by formally adopting a resolution pledging the Association's support in defense of the tenure law:

Be It Resolved, That the Executive Council of the

¹³Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 109-10.

Louisiana Teachers' Association go on record as deploring the reported dismissals of teachers in violation of the tenure law in various sections of the state and that it offer its financial support to carry a test case of the tenure law through the courts, this case to be selected by a committee appointed by the president. . . .¹⁴

This problem seems to have been solved without difficulty, for among resolutions passed by the Association at its 1937 convention at Shreveport was one commending the Governor and the Legislature for having passed the tenure law and praising "the school officials of the state for their adherence to the tenure law."¹⁵ But H. L. Campbell's report for the Association's Legislative Committee, published in the same issue of Louisiana Schools, noted that the tenure law had "had rough sailing," and urged that it be given time by all concerned to "prove its merit."¹⁶ State Superintendent Harris, commenting on this early "rough sailing," also recommended in an open letter to Phillips that "we should learn by several years experience

¹⁴Ibid., p. 65.

¹⁵"Report of the Resolutions Committee," Louisiana Schools, XV (December, 1937), 7.

¹⁶"Report of the Legislative Committee," Louisiana Schools, XV (December, 1937), 27.

. . . before we begin to tamper with our Tenure Act."¹⁷ A bill to repeal the tenure law was introduced in the regular session of the Legislature in 1938. Its fate and the success of the Association's battle against it was clearly described in the report of the Legislative Committee:

A bill repealing the teacher tenure law was introduced but at Superintendent Harris's suggestion it was so modified as to make no change in the law as it affects teachers already under tenure but would have made a slight change in the matter of dismissing probationary teachers. At the suggestion of the Louisiana Teachers' Association this bill was still further modified and although the amended bill really made no actual change in the tenure law, we still opposed it because we felt it was our duty to do so. However, the bill was finally passed, whereupon we strenuously urged [the Governor] to veto it and were gratified to know that he did so.¹⁸

At its convention in Baton Rouge in 1938, the Association adopted a resolution commending the Governor for vetoing the bill.¹⁹

Defense of the Retirement System

In the December-January issue of Louisiana Schools

¹⁷"The Tenure Law," Louisiana Schools, XV (February, 1938), 3.

¹⁸"Report of the Legislative Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVI (September, 1938), 15.

¹⁹"Report of the Resolutions Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVI (December, 1938), 23 and 31.

in 1936-37, P. C. Rogers, secretary-treasurer of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, contributed the first of what became an almost monthly series of articles about teacher-retirement plans in general, and about the Louisiana system in particular.²⁰ He explained the provisions of the teacher-retirement law, and he outlined the working of retirement-system machinery as the plan became operative. There seems never to have been serious opposition to teacher-retirement benefits in Louisiana after the law went into effect, although opposition developed later to proposals for liberalization. There were eleven thousand members enrolled within a year after the law was passed, with the name of State Superintendent of Public Education T. H. Harris heading the list.²¹ The principal threat to the system during Phillips's administration as executive secretary came in the form of efforts to have groups or individuals admitted to the system as participants who had not been considered when the actuarial calculations

²⁰P. C. Rogers, "How the Retirement System Will Increase School Efficiency," Louisiana Schools, XIV (December, 1936-January, 1937), 20.

²¹P. C. Rogers, "Retirement Information," Louisiana Schools, XIV (May, 1937), 19.

were made upon which the system's financial framework rested. By May, 1938, there were fears that some attempt might be made in the regular session of the Legislature to amend the law to increase retirement benefits of those participating teachers whose allowances would be proportional in part to the low salaries prevailing in Louisiana during the 1890-1910 period. A writer for the May issue of Louisiana Schools in 1938 said: "We hope there will be no tinkering with the retirement law."²² In recounting its activities during the 1938 legislative session, the Legislative Committee of the Association said:

Two bills affecting the teachers' retirement law were introduced. These bills would have thrown the system open to admit a number of persons who were not considered when the actuarial study of the system was made and whose admission to the system would have endangered its solvency. We were fortunate enough to have these bills killed in the House Committee on Education.²³

In its report to the convention at Baton Rouge in 1938, the Association's Committee on Teacher Retirement expressed approval of this action, but did not preclude the

²²"The Legislature," Louisiana Schools, XV (May, 1938), 18.

²³"Report of the Legislative Committee," loc. cit.

possibility of changes later, saying: "To make changes in the law before it becomes well established, we think very unwise."²⁴ Rogers recalled that the battle to safeguard the actuarial soundness of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana began as soon as the System went into effect, and observed that the battle continues today.²⁵

Teachers' Salaries

If Louisiana teachers could point with satisfaction to strong job-tenure legislation and to one of the nation's most liberal retirement systems, they found conditions much less desirable in the matter of salaries. Noting that in the 1934-35 school session the average Louisiana elementary-school teacher received approximately \$14.50 each week in salary, Phillips proposed in an editorial that the State "find the means to finance the schools with a minimum salary schedule of \$1,000.00 per year, payable in twelve monthly payments."²⁶ In May, 1937, the Executive Council

²⁴"Report of the Committee on Teacher Retirement," Louisiana Schools, XVI (December, 1938), 18.

²⁵Interview with P. C. Rogers, January 24, 1968.

²⁶"Teachers Salaries," Louisiana Schools, XIV (May, 1937), 16.

of the Association commended the Governor's "efforts to provide ten months salaries in the current year and [pledged] the support of the Louisiana Teachers' Association to that end."²⁷ On May 17, it was announced that every public-school teacher in Louisiana would receive a tenth monthly salary payment for the 1936-37 school year. Louisiana Schools commented: ". . . the Louisiana Teachers' Association . . . has moved a step nearer our ultimate goal--twelve months pay for teachers."²⁸ The Association at its convention in Shreveport in 1937 passed a resolution urging "that uniform parish salary schedules, based upon training and experience, be adopted."²⁹ In May, 1939, Louisiana teachers "who want higher salaries, and those who oppose any reduction in the present salary schedule" were urged to advocate passage of a federal-aid bill and to oppose "raids on the severance tax fund."³⁰ Committees of

²⁷Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 62.

²⁸"Ten Months Pay," Louisiana Schools, XV (September, 1937), 16.

²⁹"Report of the Resolutions Committee," Louisiana Schools, XV (December, 1937), 7.

³⁰"Teachers' Salaries," Louisiana Schools, XVI (May, 1939), 16.

the Association named for 1939, however, did not include a committee on teachers' salaries, although committees concerned with other matters of welfare interest to teachers were appointed.³¹

Other Welfare Interests

The list of the Association's committees in 1939 included several the existence of which revealed, at least partially, specific welfare concerns of Louisiana teachers. Listed were: the Committee on Credit Unions, the Hospitalization Committee, and the Committee on Teacher Leaves of Absence. These were in addition to the older committees on tenure and teacher retirement, which were still in existence.³²

At the convention at Shreveport in 1937, the Association adopted a resolution requesting that "each parish school board adopt a fair and adequate sick leave for teachers."³³ At a December meeting following the

³¹"L. T. A. Committees--1939," Louisiana Schools, XVI (February, 1939), 12-15.

³²Ibid.

³³"Report of the Resolutions Committee," loc. cit.

convention, the Executive Council voted to refer "the matter of sick leave" to the Association's Research Committee for study.³⁴ In May, 1938, the Research Committee submitted a report advocating that the Association recommend ten days of annual sick leave for Louisiana teachers.³⁵ An "annual leave of absence with pay for sick leave and other emergencies" became one of the prime objectives of the newly organized Department of Classroom Teachers.³⁶ The Executive Council of the State teachers' Association in December, 1938, authorized appointment of a "committee to study the question of leaves of absence, including sick and sabbatical leaves."³⁷

Group hospitalization came under study by the Association during Phillips's administration as executive secretary, and the possibility of establishing credit unions for teachers was investigated. At its meeting in

³⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 71.

³⁵Ibid., p. 88.

³⁶"Aims of the Department of Classroom Teachers," Louisiana Schools, XVI (November, 1938), 54.

³⁷Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 99.

December, 1938, the Executive Council resolved that

. . . the Louisiana Teachers' Association go on record as strongly endorsing and recommending the group hospitalization plan put out by the Protective Life Insurance Company and the Executive Council also request the superintendents, principals, and teachers of the state to give this important matter serious consideration as in the opinion of the Council the protection from the hazards of excessive hospital and operation fees is essential to the economic well being of the teacher.³⁸

In an article outlining what were felt to be contributions and aims of the Association, the editor of Louisiana Schools said in January, 1939:

Reverting to the field of teacher welfare, we are confronted with the problems of group hospitalization, group insurance, and credit unions. For the first, the L. T. A. has helped to work out and has endorsed a plan that is sold by a reliable company with ample financial resources. Group insurance offers a fertile field for promoting teacher welfare. Louisiana's teachers have only three credit unions. We should have a sufficient number so every teacher in the state would have access to this source of economical financing.³⁹

III. PROMOTION OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

The State teachers' Association made its chief contribution to promotion of professional excellence among

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹"The L. T. A. and You," Louisiana Schools, XVI (January, 1939), 21.

Louisiana teachers during the comparatively brief tenure of Spencer Phillips through its journal. The curriculum study undertaken State-wide by the State Department of Education and the College of Education at Louisiana State University was in full swing during this period. Major articles related to curriculum-study activities, all of them written by Louisiana educators, provided the bulk of the material published in Louisiana Schools in many of its issues. By this means the Association helped to intensify professional interest in methods and materials of teaching. The Executive Council acted in May, 1938, to make Louisiana Schools available to students in teacher-training programs in Louisiana colleges and universities for a subscription fee of one dollar.⁴⁰ Holding that a knowledge of the work and objectives of teachers' associations had a part to play in the training of teachers, the Council adopted a resolution urging presidents of colleges and directors of teacher training in Louisiana "to offer instruction in the important work of educational associations to all students in teacher-training programs," and volunteered to provide

⁴⁰Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 87.

lecturers to accomplish this purpose.⁴¹ At the Baton Rouge convention in 1938, the Association passed a resolution by which it officially recognized the Future Teachers of America and made it "part of the active work of the organization."⁴²

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

While Spencer Phillips was its executive secretary, the Association of Louisiana teachers continued to follow trends that were developing from the time of reorganization in 1922. The work of key committees attracted more and more interest. New departments and sections were formed. Louisiana interest in activities of the National Education Association intensified. The organizational setup became more centralized.

Department of Superintendence

During the week beginning February 20, 1937, the Department of Superintendence of the National Education

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 99-100.

⁴²"Report of the Resolutions Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVI (December, 1938), 32.

Association held its annual meeting in New Orleans. As was noted earlier, the Executive Council of the Association of Louisiana teachers demonstrated the interest of Louisiana educators by appropriating the sum of five hundred dollars to help defray the cost of entertaining delegates to the convention. Louisiana Schools commented on the quality of this entertainment:

An excellent program of entertainment was provided by the city, three main features of which were the pageant, "The Glory of Dixie," the great outdoor breakfast, and the school children's carnival parade.⁴³

One of the highlights of the convention was the presentation to John Dewey of a certificate of honorary life membership in the Department of Superintendence.⁴⁴

Louisianian President of National Education Association

The campaign to place Amy H. Hinrichs of New Orleans in the presidency of the National Education Association began while G. O. Houston was executive secretary of the State teachers' Association of Louisiana. Efforts to secure election of the New Orleans school principal in 1937

⁴³"The Meeting of the Department of Superintendence, N. E. A.," Louisiana Schools, XIV (March, 1937), 15.

⁴⁴Ibid.

were unsuccessful, but victory was achieved at the San Francisco convention of the National Education Association in 1939. Her election, accomplished in July, was announced in the September issue of Louisiana Schools, the same issue which contained news of Phillips's resignation as executive secretary.⁴⁵

Louisiana Membership in National Organization

The campaign launched in behalf of Amy H. Hinrichs's candidacy for the presidency of the national teachers' organization coincided with an intensified drive to increase Louisiana membership in the National Education Association. In January, 1937, the Executive Council authorized appointment of an "N. E. A. Committee" to assist in the Hinrichs campaign and ruled that the State membership director of the National Education Association should act as chairman.⁴⁶ Louisiana membership in the National Education Association was 3,907 as of May 31, 1937, representing an increase of 417 per cent, the highest state percentage of

⁴⁵"Miss Amy Hinrichs," Louisiana Schools, XVII (September, 1939), 17.

⁴⁶Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 57.

increase noted in a national campaign for members then under way.⁴⁷ In February, 1939, the Association's journal announced:

Today we boast of the largest number of 100 per cent parishes (counties) in the nation with ten, namely: Acadia, Ascension, Avoyelles, Bienville, Catahoula, Claiborne, Iberia, Sabine, St. Tammany, West Baton Rouge. Several other parishes are nearing the 100 per cent goal and they should go over the top during the present month.⁴⁸

Growth of State Association

It was noted in an earlier section of this study that Jack Hayes, president of the State teachers' Association of Louisiana in 1931, estimated that the number of members in the State organization was "approximately 10,000" at the end of his term of office. The total membership did not increase spectacularly during the years which followed to the end of Phillips's administration, but in 1938 the total membership of 10,650 represented about 99 per cent of Louisiana's white public-school teachers, according to a letter addressed to members of the

⁴⁷"How They Did It," Louisiana Schools, XV (September, 1937), 4.

⁴⁸"N. E. A. Membership," Louisiana Schools, XVI (February, 1939), 20.

Legislature by Association President L. W. Ferguson.⁴⁹ By
January, 1939, the membership total exceeded 11,000.⁵⁰

Reorganization of Executive Council

At its convention at Baton Rouge in 1938 the Association adopted a constitutional amendment designed to make its Executive Council regionally more representative by providing that Council members should be elected on the basis of congressional districts rather than from the State at large. The amendment read:

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Louisiana Teachers' Association, that Section 3 of Article III be amended and reenacted so as to read as follows:

Section 3. The Executive Council shall be composed of the president, who shall be chairman, the first and second vice-presidents, the state superintendent of public education, ex-officio, and one person from each congressional district, elected by the members from that congressional district at the annual meeting, for overlapping terms of four years each; provided, that in the election held in 1939 the persons elected from the odd-numbered congressional districts shall be elected for terms of two years each. The two members elected in 1938 shall count as the representatives of their respective districts.⁵¹

⁴⁹"Letter from President Ferguson," Louisiana Schools, XV (April, 1938), 24.

⁵⁰"The L. T. A. and You," op. cit., p. 20.

⁵¹"Constitutional Amendment," Louisiana Schools, XVI (December, 1938), 19.

Department of Classroom Teachers

The Department of Classroom Teachers attracted increasing recognition during Phillips's administration. By resolution at the Shreveport convention of 1937, the Department, noting that "over ninety per cent of the members of the L. T. A. are classroom teachers," requested the Executive Council of the Association "to appropriate a minimum annual sum of at least \$300 for the Department of Classroom Teachers."⁵² When Mrs. Thais M. Oglesby appeared before the Executive Council in May, 1938, however, the annual appropriation requested had increased to five hundred dollars. The Council proceeded to appropriate two hundred dollars for the remainder of the year and agreed to make annual appropriations thereafter for the Department of Classroom Teachers.⁵³ In November, 1938, the Executive Council adopted, for the 1938-39 school year, a budget in which was set aside the full annual appropriation requested by the Department of Classroom Teachers.⁵⁴ At a meeting

⁵²"Resolutions," loc. cit.

⁵³Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 82.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 93-94.

following the 1938 convention in Baton Rouge, the Council ruled no other meetings at future conventions should be scheduled "during the meeting of the Department of Classroom Teachers."⁵⁵

Committee Activities

Increasing recognition of the importance of the work of committees of the Association was indicated by an action of the Executive Council at a meeting in February, 1937. It ruled that committee members should be granted travel expenses computed at the rate of four cents per mile to and from committee meetings.⁵⁶ The allowance was increased to five cents per mile in 1938, and expenses for meals and hotel rooms also were ordered reimbursed.⁵⁷

Change of Treasurer

Until 1938, the treasurer of the Association was not required to be a resident of Baton Rouge, where headquarters of the organization was maintained after the reorganization

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 101.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 59.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 77.

of 1922. At a March meeting in 1938, the Executive Council voted to select a "treasurer conveniently located to the Secretary's office in Baton Rouge."⁵⁸ In May, 1938, Gertrude Fridge, of Baton Rouge, was appointed to succeed R. H. Agate, of Lafayette, who had been treasurer since the reorganization of the Association. For Agate's "long and faithful service" to the Association the Executive Council had already expressed appreciation.⁵⁹

Committees and Departments

During Phillips's administration as executive secretary, two significant new departments and an influential committee were created to facilitate organizational efficiency of the State teachers' Association. A special committee, appointed to appraise the 1937 convention in Shreveport, submitted its report to the Association the following year in Baton Rouge. Among other things, it recommended (1) that future conventions begin on Sunday evening before Thanksgiving and end with a business session

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 76.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 85.

the following Wednesday morning, and (2) that the committee be continued as a standing committee.⁶⁰ These suggestions were carried out. The annual convention period recommended by the committee has become traditional with the Association. The first convention to which the new rule was applied met at Alexandria in 1939. The Appraisal Committee to evaluate each year's convention is still a standing committee of the Association. Following recommendations of the Executive Council, the Association created a Department of Secondary Principals and a Department of Supervisors. The principals held their organizational meeting at the Shreveport convention in 1937,⁶¹ while the supervisors organized at the Baton Rouge convention held the following year.⁶²

Phillips's Resignation

Spencer Phillips submitted his resignation in

⁶⁰"Appraising the Shreveport Convention," Louisiana Schools, XVI (November, 1938), 40.

⁶¹"Convention Program," Louisiana Schools, XV (November, 1937), 27.

⁶²"Convention Program," Louisiana Schools, XVI (November, 1938), 13.

writing to the Executive Council on August 17, 1939, and Howard W. Wright, who had been superintendent of education for twenty-two years in Catahoula Parish, was elected unanimously to succeed him.⁶³ Phillips had been appointed a member of the Louisiana Tax Commission.⁶⁴

⁶³Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 113-14.

⁶⁴"Spencer Phillips," Louisiana Schools, XVII (September, 1939), 17.

CHAPTER VI

ADMINISTRATION OF HOWARD W. WRIGHT, 1939-1952

The administration of Howard W. Wright, first executive secretary of the State teachers' Association of Louisiana who had not previously been president of the organization, covered thirteen years. The early part of his administration came during World War II, when Louisiana public schools and public-school teachers were faced anew with problems of wartime inflation. The Association again pooled its resources with those of other agencies concerned with public education, doing battle for increased tax revenues to preserve the quality of education in time of economic stress. Throughout Wright's administration, during the war years and later, Louisiana teachers were working through their Association to improve their economic position and their professional status by means of better salary schedules and improved welfare provisions. Major moves were made by the Association to set up professional standards in keeping with the degree of dignity it sought for teachers. Organizational developments brought

increased economic strength to the Association and made it possible to offer improved services to its membership.

I. GENERAL SERVICE TO PUBLIC EDUCATION

In the area of service to public education generally, as well as in other divisions of usefulness, the administration of Howard W. Wright was notable for the activity of the Association in working with other agencies for advancement through legislation. But the State teachers' organization did not limit its activities, in seeking to meet any of its responsibilities, solely to participation in the legislative lobby.

Cooperative Effort in Behalf of Schools

Cooperation with other educational groups in advancing the cause of public-school education was a traditional practice of the Association of Louisiana teachers. While Howard W. Wright served as executive secretary, this practice came to be emphasized more and more, especially in the planning and promotion of school legislative programs. The increased emphasis on organized cooperative effort was particularly evident prior to and during the 1944 session of the Legislature. A writer in Louisiana Schools said:

Over a period of several weeks prior to assembly of the State Legislature a series of conferences were held, led by Superintendent [John E.] Coxe and attended by each of the following groups: the State Department of Education, the Louisiana Teachers' Association, the Louisiana School Board Members Association, the Louisiana Parent Teachers Association, the L. T. A. Classroom Teacher Department, and the L. T. A. Section of Parish Superintendents. . . .

The objective of these meetings was to reach complete agreement and a thorough understanding between school personnel on proposed school legislation as recommended by the respective organizations, departments, or groups represented. . . . There can be no question but that the agreements and understandings attained through these conferences were a decisive factor in the success of the program of legislation enacted.¹

This kind of cooperative effort by legislative interests proved an effective force in securing favorable laws. It was formalized in 1948 with the organization of the United School Committee at a conference held February 16 in Baton Rouge. Educational agencies affiliated with the committee at that time were the Louisiana School Boards Association, which issued the call for the organizational meeting, the Louisiana Teachers' Association, the Louisiana Superintendents Association, the Louisiana Parent-Teacher Association, and the Department of Classroom Teachers of

¹"L. T. A. Legislative Program," Louisiana Schools, XXII (September, 1944), 18.

the Louisiana Teachers' Association.²

Residue of Severance-tax Fund

In recapitulating the activities of his group, S. M. Shows, chairman of the Legislative Committee of the State teachers' Association during the extra and regular sessions of the Legislature in 1940, gave first place to successful efforts to get legislative backing for a "constitutional amendment placing the severance tax back into the constitution for the schools and preventing its diversion by legislative act."³ Both sessions passed resolutions proposing the amendment. When Shows made his report, the proposal had been voted down at the polls in April, and the re-enacted resolution was to be submitted to the electorate again in November. On the second trial, the proposal was approved. It provided that "after allowing funds and appropriations as provided for elsewhere by this Constitution, and providing that not more than Five Hundred Thousand (\$500,000.00) Dollars" be set aside yearly to

²"L. E. A.-School Boards Liaison Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXVI (January, 1949), 24.

³"Legislative Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVIII (November, 1940), 36.

defray the cost of administration and enforcement, the remainder of the severance-tax fund should be used to pay for free school books and free school supplies for school children.⁴ More important in the opinion of Louisiana educators was a paragraph which added:

When sufficient funds have accumulated for the payment of all such school books and supplies and other fixed charges, then, before the tenth day of each month, the State Treasurer shall transfer to the State Public School Fund such balances as have accrued. This Section shall be self-operative and all State officers affected hereby are required to carry out the provisions of this Section without further action.⁵

Actually, the constitutional amendment adopted in 1940 did not put the severance tax into the Constitution of 1921 for school purposes. The first amendment designating the residue of the severance-tax fund as a source of school revenue was adopted in 1930. An amendment adopted in 1934 continued the designation. In 1936, the Louisiana electorate adopted an amendment requiring that severance-tax funds available to the schools be used first to supply free

⁴"Act No. 380," Amendments to the Constitution of the State of Louisiana Adopted at Election Held on November 5, 1940 (printed by authority of James A. Gremillion, Secretary of State), p. 52.

⁵Ibid.

school books and supplies, with the remainder to go into the State public-school fund.⁶ But the amendment of 1940 made constitutional provisions affecting the severance tax much stronger, and helped prevent repetition of the fund diversions about which Shows himself, as related in Chapter V, complained bitterly in 1938.

Shows noted that this was one of several legislative developments in 1940 which were important to Louisiana public-school education. "When your legislative program was adopted last November," said Shows, "we all felt we were adopting a long time program, but in one year with but two exceptions . . . the whole program was enacted."⁷ The campaign had begun in December, 1939, with letters directed by Wright to gubernatorial candidates asking them to express their attitudes toward each item in the Association's legislative program.⁸

Other School Legislation of 1940

Some of the bills enacted by the Legislature in its

⁶West's Louisiana Statutes Annotated: Constitution (St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Company, 1955), II, 867-68.

⁷"Legislative Committee," loc. cit.

⁸"Expressions from Candidates," Louisiana Schools, XVII (January, 1940), 17-19.

sessions of 1940 brought teacher-welfare advancements. Acts passed which, like the severance-tax resolution, had a more general application to education (1) enabled parish school boards to "appoint their commissioners and hold their own tax elections," (2) repealed laws which had "disenfranchised" in property-tax elections small property owners who had "availed themselves of homestead exemption," and (3) levied an additional tax on certain tobacco products to benefit the school fund.⁹ In 1940, the Association lent its support once again to the forces which brought defeat to another bill aimed at making the office of parish superintendent elective instead of appointive. Shows reported that the Legislative Committee "devoted no little time to preventing the passage of bad legislation."¹⁰

Wartime Economic Problems

Inflation of the cost of living, and accompanying high wages in industry, accentuated the financial problems of Louisiana education during the early years of Howard W. Wright's administration as executive secretary of the

⁹"Legislative Committee," loc. cit.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 45.

Association. Much legislation sought by the Association and cooperating agencies during this period was aimed at easing the wartime financial strain. A resolution adopted by the Executive Council at a meeting in May, 1941, noted that teachers in growing numbers were leaving their positions to "accept more profitable employment in industry, business, and government service," and said:

Therefore, be it resolved by the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association that the Governor of Louisiana, the State Legislature, the administrators of all public school systems of the state, and the public in general be and they are hereby urged to give every possible consideration to the matter of providing adequate financial support for the payment of teachers' salaries and maintaining the public schools of Louisiana in order that

(1) Teaching efficiency will not be lowered in Louisiana,

(2) Teachers may meet increased living costs without undue embarrassment, and

(3) Additional educational services for public and individual may be provided.¹¹

At its convention at New Orleans in 1941, the Association passed a resolution requesting legislation in the 1942 session of the Legislature providing that money

¹¹Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. II, p. 153.

left in the property-tax relief fund after payment of homestead tax exemptions should go into the public-school fund, and that this augmentation should be in addition to money already provided for the schools.¹² The legislation was introduced in 1942, but failed to pass. In the 1944 session, which was preceded by intensive cooperative activity of several educational agencies, an Act (Act No. 64)¹³ was passed which dedicated the residue of the property-tax relief fund to the public schools for a period of four years.¹⁴

Other legislation passed by the Legislature in 1944 provided for emergency appropriation to the schools from the general fund, and submitted to the electorate a proposed constitutional amendment which would authorize parish school boards to raise ad valorem tax rates from three mills to five mills. The amendment was approved at an election held on November 7, 1944.¹⁵ E. R. Hester,

¹²Ibid., p. 162.

¹³"Act No. 64," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1944 (published by authority of the State), pp. 170-72.

¹⁴"L. T. A. Legislative Program," op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁵"Act No. 312," Amendments to the Constitution of the State of Louisiana Adopted at Election Held on November 7, 1944 (issued by Wade O. Martin, Jr., Secretary of State), pp. 6-9.

president of the Association at the 1943 convention, was named by the Executive Council "as special representative of the . . . Association to continue the fight for additional school revenues" during the 1944 session of the Legislature.¹⁶

Compulsory Attendance

The wartime Legislature of 1944 passed legislation other than school-finance enactments to bring about advancement for public-school education. One of the bills endorsed by the cooperating educational agencies which adopted a joint legislative program prior to the 1944 legislative session resulted in Act. No. 239, which provided "for the compulsory school attendance of all children within the State of Louisiana between the ages of seven and fifteen years both inclusive."¹⁷ This Act, unlike earlier State-wide school-attendance laws, provided enforcement machinery, headed by visiting teachers, and designated specific penalties for noncompliance.

¹⁶Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. III, p. 23.

¹⁷"Act No. 239," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1944 (published by authority of the State), p. 711.

Another Move for Cooperative Effort

The Association put the weight of its influence behind cooperation among school agencies in the State at its convention in Alexandria in 1945. Recognition of the success attributable to cooperation in backing a unified legislative program in 1944 was implicit in the resolution, which said:

Whereas more strength and influence result from a united front of the state educational agencies acting cooperatively, therefore

Be It Resolved that each education agency, namely, the Louisiana Teachers' Association, the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, the Parish School Board Members' Association, the Parish Superintendents, the Visiting Teachers' Association, the State College Association, and the Special Schools, appoint representatives to act as a committee of the whole to go before the public, the press, and the Legislature, with a united program for educational advancement in Louisiana, and for requests for funds for operating and maintaining the educational agencies of the State.¹⁸

Through the 1940's and on to the end of Wright's tenure this intensified stress of cooperative effort among educational interests was evident in successful campaigns for school legislation. Funds voted in the Legislature in

¹⁸"Resolutions Adopted at 1945 Convention," Louisiana Schools, XXIII (January, 1946), 21.

1946 for the public schools were greater by millions of dollars than the amount available the previous school year.¹⁹ The Executive Council, however, found that this increase was insufficient and went on record, at a meeting held November 24, 1946, with a plea to the Governor to call a special session of the Legislature to provide additional funds to make up "a minimum increase of twelve million dollars (\$12,000,000) in school funds" for each year of the biennium.²⁰ This resolution was adopted by the Association's convention which met in Shreveport the following day.²¹ It was among the influences which led to the calling of a special session of the Legislature which made additional appropriations for education.²² This campaign for additional funds by the Association and cooperating organizations was consistent, and the favorable, if not

¹⁹"Progressive Steps," Louisiana Schools, XXIV (September, 1946), 19.

²⁰Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 81.

²¹"Resolutions Adopted at 1946 LTA Convention," Louisiana Schools, XXIV (January, 1947), 22.

²²"Act No. 3," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Extraordinary Session, 1947 (issued by Wade O. Martin, Jr., Secretary of State), pp. 9-11.

always completely satisfying, response of the Legislature was almost as consistent. The September issue of Louisiana Schools in 1948 reflected the concern of the Legislature at its regular session that year. The journal summarized eighty-eight Acts affecting public education which were passed by the 1948 Legislature.²³ They included Acts making substantial increases in State support for the public schools.

Twelve-grade School System

The Executive Council of the Association adopted a resolution which endorsed the appointment by State Superintendent of Public Education John E. Coxé "of the Committee of Educators selected for a study of the Twelve-Year Program and Vocational Education."²⁴ Appointment of the committee by Superintendent Coxé, and the committee's subsequent recommendations, led to approval by the State Board of Education of a twelve-grade school program in

²³"Acts Adopted at the 1948 Session of the Legislature," Louisiana Schools, XXVI (September, 1948), 20-26.

²⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

Louisiana. In its resolution of endorsement, the Executive Council said:

. . . We re-affirm our faith in the teachers of our State to meet this challenge and ask that they give unselfishly of their time in helping to draft all plans in the building of a greater and better school system for the children of our State.²⁵

Publicity for Public Schools

During the administration of Howard W. Wright as executive secretary of the Association, the agency continued to perform its traditional service of carrying the public-school message to the citizens of Louisiana. The Association's Publicity Committee in 1944 called for increased emphasis of school publicity, declaring in its report: "Our schools must be sold to the paying public."²⁶ This position also was taken by the Publicity Committee appointed for 1945. It called for a reorganization of publicity activity and the appropriation of "adequate money with which to operate."²⁷ At a meeting of the Executive

²⁵Ibid., p. 42.

²⁶"Report of Publicity Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXI (February, 1944), 23.

²⁷"Report of Publicity Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXII (January, 1945), 24.

Council in June, 1946, H. J. Bergeron, president of the Association, told Council members of the effectiveness of efforts at publicity made by the Association's units and individual members:

He expressed the belief that the public is more completely informed as to the conditions and needs of public education in the State than it has been in any former time, and that as a result of being informed, the public desires that the State, through its Legislature and other State officials, provide adequate and permanent finances to meet educational needs as have been pointed out.²⁸

In 1949, the Public Relations Committee of the Association, newly reorganized under Gordon A. Webb, the Association's first full-time field secretary, held a series of meetings throughout the State during the month of September.²⁹ It adopted as its two principal objectives:

To acquaint the public with the new service now being rendered by Louisiana schools as a result of increased appropriations;

To acquaint the public with the desire of teachers to provide even better services geared to the needs of the child and the community.³⁰

²⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 72.

²⁹"Public Relations Committee Holds Meetings Throughout State," Louisiana Schools, XXVII (October, 1949), 7.

³⁰Ibid.

Webb, who directed the series of public-relations conferences in 1949, was named field secretary by the Executive Council at a meeting held on August 12, 1948. The Council stipulated in making the appointment that Webb also should be assistant editor of Louisiana Schools.³¹ The committee he headed was comprised of eight members, one from each of the State's congressional districts.³² The importance of carrying the total message of public education to the people was recognized by the United School Committee in 1951. By that time the association of school interests had perfected its organization and listed among its affiliated agencies: the State teachers' Association, the Louisiana School Boards Association, the Louisiana Classroom Teachers Association, the Louisiana Principals Association, the Louisiana Superintendents Association, the Louisiana Supervisors Association, the Visiting Teacher Association of Louisiana, and the state-supported teacher-training institutions of Louisiana taken as a group.

³¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 111.

³²"Report of the Field Secretary on the LEA Public Relations Program," Louisiana Schools, XXVII (October, 1949), 13.

Listed also as a participating agency was the Louisiana Parent-Teacher Association, although it was noted that this organization was "not presently affiliated on the state level."³³ One of the major objectives of the United School Committee was to "keep the public informed with reference to educational needs and progress."³⁴

Federal Aid to Education

During the early years of Howard W. Wright's administration as executive secretary of the Association, the organization periodically endorsed federal aid for public-school education. The meeting of the House of Delegates at Baton Rouge in 1944 adopted a resolution which was typical of the interest in federal-aid legislation held by Louisiana teachers during that period. The long resolution read in part: ..

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the . . . Association, through its representative assembly in convention, endorses the pending legislation for federal aid to education without federal control now before the Congress, and urges the Louisiana representatives and senators to

³³"Working Together--United School Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXIX (December, 1951), 6-7.

³⁴Ibid., p. 7.

vote and work for speedy and final enactment of such proposed legislation into law at the earliest possible time. . . .³⁵

The principle of preservation of local control of schools in connection with federal aid was typically spelled out in such resolutions, and in editorials in support of federal aid appearing in Louisiana Schools. In an editorial commenting on a federal-aid bill pending in the Eightieth Congress, Louisiana Schools said in part:

Progress on legislation proposing Federal aid to public elementary and secondary schools, with every phase of control absolutely forbidden, as provided in S. 472 and HR 2953, has never advanced so far as in the first session of this Congress.³⁶

Editorial support for federal aid to education continued into 1949, but was not apparent in editorial or resolution for the remainder of the Wright administration. The last officially recorded convention resolution adopted in connection with federal aid during that period by the

³⁵"Resolutions Adopted by the House of Delegates of the Louisiana Teachers' Association at the Annual Meeting, December 8, 1944, Baton Rouge, La.," Louisiana Schools, XXII (January, 1945), 10.

³⁶"Status of Federal Aid Bills," Louisiana Schools, XXV (December, 1947), 13.

Association was offered in 1947 at Alexandria.³⁷

Supporting the War Effort

While the Association was lending its influence to the campaign for federal aid for public-school education during the war years, it did not neglect to support the national war effort. Exerting what influence it could bring to bear as the collective voice of the membership, the Executive Council at a meeting in August, 1941, called upon school authorities to solve problems created by an anticipated late school-opening date in some parishes. Its resolution said:

Therefore, be it resolved . . . that parish and state school officials and other state officials of Louisiana be and are hereby respectfully requested to use the power and authority of their offices to ameliorate the conditions of teachers and other employees of the respective school boards in the parishes where the opening date of schools has been deferred by arranging to pay their monthly salaries on or about the time the salaries would have been paid had not the opening date of school been thus deferred and that these salary payments successively continue throughout the school year.³⁸

³⁷"Resolutions on School Legislation," Louisiana Schools, XXV (January, 1948), 13.

³⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 157.

The Council approved of the delay in school opening because the step was taken to further the program of national defense by helping keep roads and highways clear for military convoys. Troops were on maneuver in Louisiana that fall. In another resolution adopted at the August meeting in 1941, the Council commended Louisiana teachers and citizens generally "for their cooperation with the United States Army in . . . lending to the success of the army training program now operating in Louisiana. . . ." ³⁹

At a meeting in March, 1942, the Executive Council contributed tangible support to the war effort when it "authorized and directed" Howard W. Wright to act for the Association and "invest approximately \$3,750.00 . . . in United States Defense Bonds. . . ." ⁴⁰

War and Peace Fund

An act more directly related to the well-being of education was the Association's acceptance of its quota of seven thousand dollars to be contributed to the War and

³⁹Ibid., p. 158.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 165.

Peace Fund established by the National Education Association. The Executive Council of the State teachers' Association of Louisiana at a meeting held in May, 1943, voted unanimously in favor of State Superintendent Coxe's motion that the quota be accepted, after hearing E. R. Hester, president of the Association, describe discussion of the fund at a regional meeting held in Dallas, Texas.⁴¹ The National Education Association set a total of \$600,000 as a national goal. Some of the purposes listed for the War and Peace Fund were:

To secure and maintain adequate salaries for teachers during and after the war.

To obtain action to correct grave educational deficiencies revealed by Selective Service.

To seek adequate financial support of education on local, state, and national bases.

To safeguard the integrity of the schools against a tendency of other agencies to take over their functions.

To foster legislative and administrative measures to deal with rapidly increasing juvenile delinquency.

To work for an educational representation at the peace table and for the establishment of an international office of education.⁴²

⁴¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 11.

⁴²"The War and Peace Fund," Louisiana Schools, XXI (September, 1943), 17.

Louisiana teachers were quick to respond to the fund appeal after schools opened in the fall of 1943. In its October issue, Louisiana Schools reported that every teacher and administrator in the Bogalusa school system, and every white teacher in Iberville Parish, had subscribed.⁴³

Wartime Thrift Program

The State teachers' Association of Louisiana gave its support to and provided publicity for the Schools-at-War Program. Noting that the school children of Louisiana "have been leading in the southern states and stand high among the best in the nation in the buying of war stamps and bonds," the Executive Council, at a meeting held in June, 1945, passed a resolution which said in part:

Therefore be it resolved that the Executive Council of the . . . Association endorse the program and express the hope that wherever possible our school officials, teachers, and affiliated organizations provide means for and encourage the children to buy stamps and bonds regularly . . . ; and,

Be it further resolved that copies of these resolutions be given the state press so that the attention

⁴³"NEA War and Peace Fund Reports," Louisiana Schools, XXI (October, 1943), 18.

of the school people shall be directed to this important matter.⁴⁴

II. TEACHER-WELFARE DEVELOPMENTS

The thirteen years covered by Howard W. Wright's administration were as notable for advancement in the field of teacher welfare as they were for increasing support for public education at the State level. Every report of legislative activity of committees and individual members of the Association during the period touched upon some aspect of the continuing campaign to make teaching a more secure and more satisfying profession. The Association acted both to protect and to extend welfare gains already made. It sought also to add additional items to the list of social benefits enjoyed by Louisiana teachers.

Teachers' Salaries

Among the arguments advanced throughout the Wright administration for providing additional State funds for education was the necessity of increasing teachers' salaries if the schools were to retain their teachers in a

⁴⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 54.

time of rising costs of living. A passage from an address by J. N. Poche, president of the Association, was a clear expression of one Louisiana educator's estimate of the economic status of Louisiana teachers in the first year of Wright's term. Addressing the Association's convention at Alexandria in 1939, Poche said in part:

Our salaries are not adequate to cover our living expenses. We are forced to go in debt each year. We try to pay back during the school term, but are always unable to pay all. Then, at the beginning of the summer we borrow again to live. We all want to keep up with modern trends in education, therefore we borrow to attend some college.⁴⁵

Citing its own efforts, and those of other agencies, the Executive Council, in December, 1941, urged the school boards not to overlook teachers' salaries when the time came to allocate State funds which the State teachers' Association hoped the Legislature would be moved to appropriate for public-school education in 1942.⁴⁶

The legislative program adopted by the Association for 1942 did not mention teachers' salaries per se, but the

⁴⁵J. N. Poche, "The Economic Status of the Teacher," Louisiana Schools, XVII (December, 1939), 25.

⁴⁶Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 162.

Association made it clear in its Council's resolution and in a resolution adopted at the convention in New Orleans in 1941 that it gave low salaries for teachers high priority among economic problems faced by Louisiana public schools. The resolution adopted at New Orleans declared that "the salaries of teachers have not been increased in accordance with rising costs of living."⁴⁷ The impact on permanency in position of Louisiana teachers was reflected in editorial comment published in Louisiana Schools in December, 1942:

Teacher turnover in the State, as evidenced by revisions of . . . mailing lists this school year, is amazingly high, more than 2,500 new name plates having been prepared, with a similar number removed, and reports of additional changes in teacher lists are received daily. Teacher replacements from 1941-42 sessions are expected to reach 3,000 names. This number may exceed total replacements for the past three years.⁴⁸

Noting that "an unusually large proportion" of the changes represented transfers of teachers to new positions outside of the profession, Louisiana Schools referred to

⁴⁷"Report of the Resolutions Committee," Louisiana Schools, XIX (December, 1941), 22.

⁴⁸"Louisiana's Teacher Supply," Louisiana Schools, XX (December, 1942), 16.

records of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.

It said:

From June 30, 1941, to November 1, 1942, 1,926 teachers have withdrawn from the system. . . . Rather than marriage as the predominant cause of withdrawals since the impetus of war industries began, . . . "change of occupation" or "to accept other employment" is the reason now ascribed for two-thirds of all cases.⁴⁹

At the convention in Alexandria in 1947, the Association adopted a resolution which urged the Louisiana Legislature to establish at the regular session of 1948 a State-wide salary schedule which would provide "a minimum salary of \$2,400 plus \$100 annual increments for 16 years for teachers holding bachelor degrees."⁵⁰ When this recommendation was substantially followed by the Legislature in passing Act. No. 155,⁵¹ Clark L. Barrow, in a report submitted to the Association for a liaison committee of which he was chairman, called attention to the effectiveness of cooperation among educational agencies. "The

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ "Resolution for Minimum Teacher Salary Schedule," Louisiana Schools, XXV (January, 1948), 16.

⁵¹ "Act No. 155," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1948 (published by authority of the State), pp. 448-50.

cooperation among the educational organizations during the past year," he said, "has been outstanding."⁵² In summing up, he declared:

School legislation in the 1948 session of the Legislature was, to a large extent, the result of the recommendations of the Committee [United School Committee]. School appropriations were the largest ever made for education by a Louisiana Legislature. This is an outstanding illustration of co-operative effort and the importance of . . . co-operation. In fact, the State revenue for education was almost twice as much for the 1948-50 biennium as it was for the previous biennium.⁵³

The Legislature not only voted a minimum-salary schedule, but provided funds for implementation. The State Department of Education also came in for praise from Barrow's committee.

Our State Superintendent, Mr. Shelby M. Jackson, and his staff did outstanding work with this Committee. They deserve a lot of credit for the results achieved.⁵⁴

Leaves of Absence for Teachers

The Committee on Teacher Leaves made its report to

⁵²"L. E. A.-School Boards Liaison Committee,"
loc. cit.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

the Association at the Alexandria convention of 1939. The committee had conducted surveys and had discovered "a wide diversity of practice both nationally, and in our own state," in the granting of sick leave, leaves of absence for study and travel, and leaves of absence to teachers attending conventions of the Association.⁵⁵ While declaring that "we are unable, with the limited time at our disposal, to carry the matter far enough to make really valuable conclusions," the report expressed the hope that the data contained in it would assist in the conduct of "a wider and more conclusive study."⁵⁶ The convention responded by saying in a resolution: "We favor a continued study of teacher leaves--so that a fair and uniform system might be proposed and carried out."⁵⁷

The Louisiana Legislature, at the regular session of 1940, acted to provide both sick leave and sabbatical leave for teachers. Senate Bill No. 331, which went into the

⁵⁵"Committee on Teacher Leaves," Louisiana Schools, XVII (November, 1939), 41.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷"Report on Resolutions Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVII (December, 1939), 8.

statute book as Act No. 215, provided teachers with ten days of sick leave annually without loss of pay.⁵⁸ This Act, which made the first State provision for sick leave for teachers, was amended in 1944 to allow individuals to accumulate twenty-five days of sick leave over a three-year period.⁵⁹ Since Howard W. Wright's administration as executive secretary of the Association, the Louisiana sick-leave law for teachers has been liberalized by other amendments.

Act. No. 319 of the regular legislative session of 1940 made provision for sabbatical leave. The first section, said:

. . . Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana, That any members of the teaching staff of public schools in all parishes and municipalities of the State of Louisiana shall be eligible for sabbatical leaves, for the purpose of professional or cultural improvement, or for the purpose of rest and recuperation, for the two semesters immediately following any twelve or more consecutive semesters of active service in the parish where such teacher is employed, or for the one semester

⁵⁸"Act No. 215," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1940 (published by authority of the State), pp. 922-23.

⁵⁹"Act No. 297," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1944 (published by authority of the State), p. 873.

immediately following any six or more consecutive semesters of such service.⁶⁰

Other sections of the lengthy Act dealt with duration of sabbatical leaves, salaries to be paid teachers on leave, selection of teachers to be granted leave, the manner in which leaves were to be spent, and preservation of the status of teachers on leave. The regular session of the Legislature in 1946 stipulated in its Act No. 235 "that absence on sick leave . . . shall not be deemed to interrupt the active service which would qualify a teacher for sabbatical leave."⁶¹ Act No. 341 of 1948 further liberalized the law governing sabbatical leave by allowing a teacher on leave to elect to be paid

. . . the difference between the salary he or she would have received during such leave if in active service in the position from which such leave is taken and the salary which a day by day substitute would receive during such leave, if assigned to said position.⁶²

⁶⁰"Act No. 319," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1940 (published by authority of the State), p. 1256.

⁶¹"Act No. 235," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1946 (published by authority of the State), p. 734.

⁶²"Act No. 341," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1948 (published by authority of the State), p. 830.

Military leave for teachers inducted into the armed services during World War II was provided by Act No. 179 of the regular legislative session of 1942, and by Act No. 173 of the regular session in 1944.^{63 64} The 1944 Act also made it mandatory that school boards "grant leaves of absence to regularly employed women teachers for a reasonable time before and after childbirth."⁶⁵

Teacher-retirement Developments

Louisiana teachers were anxious to protect the teacher-retirement law from any alterations which might undermine the financial solidarity of the Retirement System. A recommendation included in the report of the Committee on Teacher Retirement of the Association in 1940 voiced this concern:

The present retirement act should be continued as it now is. If any amendment to the law is permitted, it may open the gate to changes that may prove very

⁶³"Act No. 179," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1942 (published by authority of the State), pp. 676-78.

⁶⁴"Act No. 173," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1944 (published by authority of the State), pp. 506-08.

⁶⁵Ibid.

undesirable and that may disturb the financial soundness of the system.⁶⁶

This recommendation did not mean that the Association opposed improvement of the retirement law by amendments which could be justified actuarially. The concern for maintaining financial solidarity coupled with justifiable liberalizing change was demonstrated by a resolution adopted at the Alexandria convention of 1945. That resolution recommended, in part, that:

1. Mr. Buck, Retirement System actuary, comply with a request from Mrs. Keelen [Sue S. Keelen, president of the Association] in that he shall give to the Retirement Committee an estimate of the cost in teacher contributions to the Retirement Fund so that a member might retire on one-half of his average salary.

.

3. . . . all legislation aimed at including new groups under the Retirement Law be sponsored by the [Association] and that all such legislation be first brought before the House of Delegates before it shall be endorsed by Louisiana teachers.

.

9. . . . the Committee on Teacher Retirement continue to investigate in order to find that amount that a teacher must contribute into the System, so that he may retire on \$300, \$600, \$1200, \$1800, or \$2400 per

⁶⁶"Teachers' Retirement Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVIII (October, 1940), 12.

year.⁶⁷

When Louisiana Schools published all Louisiana teacher-welfare laws, brought up to date in publication of the revised statutes in 1950, the retirement law had undergone many liberalizing changes. A comparison of the basic sections covering computation of retirement allowances in the original law of 1936 and the amended law as published in 1950 reflected generally the enlargement of the Retirement System's various provisions. As P. C. Rogers, secretary-treasurer of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, explained in an article published in Louisiana Schools in May, 1937,⁶⁸ the original Act provided the teacher with a retirement allowance in three parts:

(a) An annuity which shall be the actuarial equivalent of his accumulated contributions at the time of his retirement; and

(b) A pension equal to the annuity allowable at age of sixty years computed on the basis of contributions made prior to the attainment of age sixty; and

(c) If he has a prior service certificate in full

⁶⁷"Resolutions Adopted at 1945 Convention," op. cit., pp. 20-21.

⁶⁸P. C. Rogers, "Retirement Information," Louisiana Schools, XIV (May, 1937), 19.

force and effect, an additional pension which shall be equal to the annuity which would have been provided at the age of sixty years by twice the contributions which he would have made during such prior service had the system been in operation and he contributed thereunder.⁶⁹

The basic provision for computation of retirement allowances included in the retirement law, as amended up to the time of publication of the revised Louisiana statutes in 1950, read:

(1) An annuity which shall be the actuarial equivalent of his accumulated contributions at the time of his retirement; and

(2) An annual pension which together with the annuity shall provide a total allowance equal to one and one-half per cent of his average compensation for any five consecutive years of allowable service at the option of the member (not to exceed seven thousand five hundred dollars), multiplied by the number of years of accredited service; provided that, the pension, as herein defined, or any other benefit payable out of any fund or account to which the state makes direct contribution, to any person becoming a member or beneficiary of, or contributor to this system after July 28, 1948, shall not exceed \$300.00 per month.⁷⁰

Eager not only to preserve the stability of the

⁶⁹"Act No. 83," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1936 (published by authority of the State), p. 222.

⁷⁰"Louisiana Teacher-Welfare Laws--Revised Statutes of 1950," Louisiana Schools, XXVII (May, 1950), 46.

Retirement System, but also to have the membership of the Association understand the Act which established it, the Executive Council at a meeting held in January, 1945, voted to request Rogers to write "a series of articles explaining the structure and operation of the Louisiana Teachers' Retirement System," and to have the articles published in the Association's journal.⁷¹ A "research retirement committee," appointed by direction of the convention of 1947 in Alexandria, was charged with responsibility of supervising an actuarial study of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana. It recommended:

. . . that this committee be charged with the responsibility of selecting and engaging an actuary, or actuaries, for the purpose of conducting the aforesaid study and that this committee advise and work with the actuary to recommend possible changes in the provisions of the Retirement Law with the view of bringing it up to date and to allow more liberal benefits for members now retiring as may be finally recommended and approved by the actuary considering the fact that the System must be actuarially sound.⁷²

Retirement-system developments continued to be published regularly in Louisiana Schools during Howard W.

⁷¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 50.

⁷²"Resolution Providing for Research Retirement Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXV (January, 1948), 11.

Wright's time as executive secretary.

Preserving Teacher-tenure Law

Another teacher-welfare law which was guarded carefully by the Association during that period was the law which provided for teacher job security. Resolutions expressing the Association's opposition to any change in the tenure law were frequent in the published proceedings of conventions. In 1941, at the New Orleans convention, the Tenure Committee warned of attacks upon the law impending in the 1942 regular session of the Legislature.⁷³ The expected attacks, however, failed to materialize, and the State tenure law in 1950, on the eve of Howard W. Wright's retirement, had undergone only one significant change. Act No. 298 of the regular session of the Legislature in 1946 provided that a teacher dismissed under the tenure law might "petition a court of competent jurisdiction for a full hearing to review the action," and, in case of reversal by the court, would be "entitled to full pay for any loss of time or salary."⁷⁴ Other lesser

⁷³"Report of the Committee on Tenure," Louisiana Schools, XIX (December, 1941), 24.

⁷⁴"Act No. 297," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1946 (published by authority of the State), pp. 922-23.

changes were made, but none of them weakened the job security provided by the Act.

Group Insurance

The advantages of group insurance contracts for teachers came under intensified study during Howard W. Wright's term as executive secretary of the Association. At a meeting in January, 1940, the Executive Council authorized E. A. Lee, the Association's president, to appoint a Hospitalization Committee to receive proposals from insurance companies, and to report on these to the Council.⁷⁵ This committee, in submitting its report, did not endorse any particular hospitalization-insurance plan or company, but said:

It is the opinion of your committee that Hospitalization Insurance serves a distinct interest in the teacher's personal life, that it adds security in one's outlook, and that it should receive sympathetic consideration from all the teachers of the state. If and when any group decides to gain this protection, your committee has no doubt but that a dependable plan from among those now operating can be found.⁷⁶

⁷⁵Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 126.

⁷⁶"Report of the Committee on Hospitalization," Louisiana Schools, XVIII (November, 1940), 36.

In the 1944 regular session of the Legislature, Act No. 184 provided that school boards should have authority to make contracts with insurance companies for group life insurance for their employees.⁷⁷ In November, 1947, the Executive Council endorsed for future study a proposal for establishment of "a form of group life insurance for teachers of Louisiana in connection with the Teachers' Retirement System."⁷⁸

Reported violations of the sick-leave law for teachers alarmed the Association's Hospitalization Committee in 1943 and 1944. The committee of 1944, noting that a recent Act permitted teachers to accumulate sick leave over a three-year period, urged violators to desist lest their actions lead to an amendment to the sick-leave law "which will practically eliminate any benefit from it."⁷⁹ In 1946, the Hospitalization Committee observed in

⁷⁷"Act No. 184," Acts Passed by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, 1944 (published by authority of the State), pp. 542-43.

⁷⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 98.

⁷⁹"Report of the Hospitalization and Leaves Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXII (January, 1945), 24.

its report that "in most parts of the state the teachers have access to some form of hospitalization that cares for most or all of the hospital bill."⁸⁰ The regular session of the Legislature in 1952, the year of Howard W. Wright's retirement, provided in Act No. 338 that school boards should have authority to make contracts "with any insurance company, hospital service and physician service legally authorized to do business in this state" to provide "group medical, surgical and hospital benefits" for their employees.⁸¹

The study of proposals for group life insurance to be instituted for teachers in connection with the Retirement System was conducted by the Welfare Committee. The committee's report, submitted by Horace C. Robinson, its chairman, in 1949, recommended formation of a "Teachers' Mutual Life Insurance Company" to provide "life and health and accident insurance" for Louisiana teachers.⁸²

⁸⁰"Report of Hospitalization Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXIV (January, 1947), 14.

⁸¹"Act No. 388," Acts of the Legislature, State of Louisiana, Regular Session, 1952 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Thomas J. Moran's Sons, Inc., 1952), p. 868.

⁸²"The Insurance Question: Digest of Teacher Welfare Committee Report," Louisiana Schools, XXVII (January, 1950), 16.

Amendment of Hatch Act

In December, 1941, by action of its Executive Council, the Association joined other educational agencies in the United States in urging that teachers be excluded from provisions of the Hatch Act, a federal law which forbade persons deriving income from federal funds to participate in political activities. The Council's resolution recommended:

. . . that the Hatch Act be so amended and revised as to exclude from its provisions public-school teachers and others engaged in educational work whose salary or any part of it comes from land grants of the Federal Government to state school systems and that copies of this resolution be forwarded to United States Senators and Congressmen from Louisiana.⁸³

This Council action played its part in bringing about amendment of the Hatch Act to remove the provisions objectionable to teachers. The amendment was passed by the United States Congress in 1942.⁸⁴

III. PROMOTION OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Concern over the economic problems of Louisiana

⁸³Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 163.

⁸⁴"Teachers' Franchise Restored," Louisiana Schools, XX (December, 1942), 18.

education which prevailed during the war years caused the State teachers' Association of Louisiana to place less emphasis on teacher competence than it might otherwise have done during World War II. During the second half of the decade of the 1940's, however, the Association turned its attention to teacher certification, workshop programs which emphasized correction of conditions which detracted from teacher efficiency, and national programs designed to improve teacher education and to upgrade standards of professional excellence among public-school teachers.

Elimination of the Temporary Certificate

A resolution adopted at an August meeting of the Executive Council of the Association in 1946 commended the State Board of Education for an action by which the Board hoped to eliminate teachers employed on the basis of temporary certificates. The resolution said:

Be it resolved by the Executive Council of the . . . Association that the State Board of Education be and is hereby commended for its wisdom in planning for the elimination of the employment of T-Certificate teachers in the public schools of Louisiana, under terms of a recently adopted resolution forbidding the issuance of emergency teaching certificates to persons with less than two years of college education during the school session 1946-47, with less than three years in the following session, and that in 1949 and thereafter, teaching certificates will be issued only to persons

whose professional and academic qualifications conform to standards of teacher certification under rules and regulations formerly adopted by the Board.

Be it further resolved that the State Board of Education be and is hereby respectfully requested to reduce the employment of unqualified persons, as determined by standard teacher certification requirements as rapidly as possible so that only the minimum number of such persons may be employed in the public schools during the ensuing two years.⁸⁵

Although conditions were such that this plan by the State Board for elimination of unqualified teachers did not work out, the Council's resolution reflected a concern of the Association which continued for valid certification. At its Shreveport convention in 1946, the Association endorsed certification standards recently adopted by the State Board of Education, and declared "that this association will never subscribe to the teaching of any child by a substandard teacher except as a temporary emergency measure caused by the war."⁸⁶

Workshop at Louisiana State University

At a meeting in May, 1949, the Executive Council of

⁸⁵Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 76.

⁸⁶"Resolutions Adopted at 1946 LTA Convention," loc. cit.

the Association appropriated the sum of nine hundred dollars to help defray expenses of persons who would attend a workshop held at Louisiana State University.⁸⁷ In-service training was the topic of a report by the Association's Research Committee even before World War II ended,⁸⁸ and interest in this kind of professional training increased. In 1945, the Research Committee reported that in-service training programs were under way in many parishes and that many of the State's colleges and universities expressed willingness to participate in workshop activities for Louisiana teachers.⁸⁹ The workshop as a method of in-service training was the subject of an address by W. A. Lawrence at the 1945 convention at Alexandria.⁹⁰ The Council's resolution which made an appropriation for the

⁸⁷Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 135.

⁸⁸"Report of LTA Research Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXII (January, 1945), 22-23.

⁸⁹"Research Committee," Louisiana Schools, XXIII (January, 1946), 12-13.

⁹⁰W. A. Lawrence, "The Workshop as an Agency for In-Service Training of Teachers," Louisiana Schools, XXIII (May, 1946), 3-4, 23-24.

workshop at Louisiana State University recommended that "in selecting the workshop participants consideration . . . be given to professional people at all levels of employment in the public school system of the State."⁹¹ Teacher certification, teaching loads in the elementary and high schools, and recruitment of teachers were among topics of study proposed for the workshop by the Association's committee in charge of planning.⁹²

Teacher Certification

In a resolution at a January meeting in 1950, the Executive Council urged Louisiana teachers to cooperate with the State Department of Education in its preparation of a plan for certification. The resolution advised:

. . . that Executive Secretary H. W. Wright address letters to each [Association] local unit president and each school superintendent stressing the importance of teachers studying the proposed plan of teacher education and certification and reporting their recommendations for changes and improvements therein; that Superintendent [Shelby M.] Jackson be respectfully requested to write similar letters to all school principals and parish superintendents of the state; that Council members write such letters to school

⁹¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 135.

⁹²Ibid., p. 123.

superintendents in the parishes of their respective districts; that copies of all parish or other teacher reports recommending changes in the plan of teacher education and certification now under consideration be forwarded to Mr. J. E. Williams, Director of Teacher Education and Certification, State Department of Education; that a copy of the report from each teacher group be forwarded to the office of [the Association] for permanent filing; and that the deadline date, June 1, 1950, for receiving these reports in the State Department of Education be especially emphasized.⁹³

Teacher Education and Professional Standards

The Executive Council of the Association voted in June, 1947, to authorize appointment of a "Committee on Teacher Education and Professional Standards to cooperate with the NEA Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards."⁹⁴ Maintaining its interest in the national body, the Council in January, 1950, directed N. B. Hackett, president of the Association, to attend a regional conference scheduled at Dallas, Texas, during the following February, with his expenses to be paid by the Association.⁹⁵ In December, 1950, the Council elected a

⁹³Ibid., p. 159.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 94.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 160.

five-man delegation to attend a regional meeting planned in January, 1951, at Jackson, Mississippi, by the Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards. It directed Howard W. Wright to ask chairmen of other Louisiana educational bodies to send delegates to the Jackson conference, stating that it "had been endorsed by the . . . Association."⁹⁶

Other Efforts to Improve Teaching

Other actions intended to improve the quality of teaching in Louisiana were taken by the Association of Louisiana teachers during Wright's period of service. Three will be name here as examples.

The Association continued its sponsorship of local chapters of the Future Teachers of America, and moved in August, 1951, to give recognition to high-school units "by issuing to each club some form of certificate of merit."⁹⁷ In 1950, the Association sent two representatives to "attend the conference sponsored by the Southern Association's Cooperative Study in Elementary Education at

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 177.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 190.

Daytona Beach, Florida. . . ."⁹⁸ In October, 1948, the Executive Council passed a resolution expressing its confidence in the educative value of annual conventions of the State teachers' Association of Louisiana. This feeling for the importance to education of attendance by teachers at the Association's conventions--a feeling which was strong among educators from the beginning of teacher-association development in Louisiana--was expressed cogently in the Council's resolution:

Whereas, the annual convention of the . . . Association is designed to promote teacher efficiency, to stimulate interest among teachers in their respective areas of school work, and to improve all phases of educational functions within the public school system, and

Whereas, in order that the maximum benefits be realized through this medium, it is desirable that teachers be encouraged to go to the convention and to attend meetings and participate in the programs in their particular fields of educational interests, therefore

Be it resolved that school officials in each of the parish and city school systems of the State be and are hereby respectfully requested to consider the suggestion of devising some practical means whereby teachers in their employment may be permitted to go to the [Association's] convention and attend programs in which they are interested, all without penalty for loss of

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 160.

time or for the payment of substitute teachers.⁹⁹

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The years covered by the administration of Howard W. Wright as executive secretary of the State teachers' Association were years notable not only for legislative accomplishments in the fields of finance and teacher welfare, but for many developments in associational organization. The Constitution of the Association was rewritten, and two codes of ethics were adopted by its membership. The staff of the central office was expanded and the Association was enabled thereby to perform additional services for its members and for Louisiana schools. A method of absentee voting was put into effect.

Convention Procedures

Improvement of convention procedures and planning was a constant concern of the Association's leadership during Wright's administration, and various groups within the convention were periodically charged with the task of critically evaluating convention processes and offering

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 116.

suggestions for improvement. An Appraisal Committee with the single duty of observing each convention with critical eyes was appointed regularly by the organization's presidents. Another group which turned its attention occasionally to convention problems was the Research Committee.

To the 1939 convention at Alexandria, the Research Committee presented a report on its study of the organization of the Association. Noting that there were at the time thirty-five departments and sections in the Association, it referred to "much comment and unfavorable criticism of the scattered meetings of these departments, the poor attendance, and the seeming lack of interest. . . ." ¹⁰⁰ It cited "numerous conflicts of meetings which are of interest to the same group of teachers." ¹⁰¹ At a January meeting in 1940, the Executive Council directed the Research Committee to give the matter further study. ¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰"Research Committee," Louisiana Schools, XVII (November, 1939), 39.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 127.

The Research Committee's final recommendations, which promised to eliminate some of the objectionable conditions, were accepted by the Council at a meeting in May, 1940.¹⁰³

In additional moves to assure a more smoothly functioning program at the 1940 convention, the Council voted to limit each nomination speech to three minutes and authorized Wright and the president of the Association to "determine the length of the general programs and . . . make definite time allotments to each number or speaker. . . ."¹⁰⁴

Immediately following the 1940 convention, apparently still not satisfied with convention arrangements, the Council turned to the Appraisal Committee. In a resolution, the Council said:

. . . The present Appraisal Committee as appointed the early part of 1940 [shall] be and are hereby requested to appraise the 1940 [Association] convention and to submit a report of same for publication in Louisiana Schools at the earliest convenient date; and that hereafter the Appraisal Committee is directed to appraise the convention to be held subsequent to its appointment. A written report of the appraisal is requested in time for publication in the following February issue of Louisiana Schools. . . .¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 133.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 140.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 145.

The various Appraisal Committees which undertook through the years to carry out this assignment of constructive criticism apparently functioned well. It was not until 1950 that the Council felt called upon to act by resolution to improve convention precedures. In April, 1950, it voted to ask convention speakers on Monday evenings to limit their remarks to thirty minutes each.¹⁰⁶ At an August meeting in 1950, Wright told the Council he had received assurances from chairmen of organizations affiliated with the Association that they would schedule no activities for the coming convention which would affect teachers who wanted to attend department and section meetings on the same day.¹⁰⁷ An Appraisal Committee found far earlier that it would never be possible to make a convention schedule which could entirely avoid causing some conflict of individual interests in departmental and section meetings of the Association itself.¹⁰⁸ By 1949, the Appraisal

¹⁰⁶Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 163.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 166.

¹⁰⁸"Report of the Appraisal Committee," Louisiana Schools, XX (March, 1943), 12.

Committee began to worry about the increased size of each successive convention. It said:

And [a crowded meeting place] poses a major problem for the . . . Association--where is there in the state a place with adequate hotel and other facilities for its large and increasing convention?¹⁰⁹

Howard W. Wright, who, as executive secretary, had on his shoulders a major share of the responsibility of planning conventions, must have gotten a great deal of satisfaction out of the Appraisal Committee's comment concerning the Shreveport convention in 1951, the last convention for which he made arrangements. In its report, the Committee said:

It is the unanimous opinion of this committee that the 1951 convention held in Shreveport far surpassed any previous [Association] convention. At every turn we observed healthy signs of professional growth, interest and improvement.¹¹⁰

Cancelled Conventions

Wartime problems of transportation and housing caused cancellation of conventions in 1943 and 1944, and

¹⁰⁹"Appraisal Committee Report," Louisiana Schools, XXVII (January, 1950), 19.

¹¹⁰"Appraisal Committee Report," Louisiana Schools, XXIX (January, 1952), 29.

forced the Association to find solutions to organizational problems which resulted from the cancellations. A two-day meeting of the House of Delegates was substituted for the full-scale gathering of teachers in each of the conventionless years. The delegates met in Baton Rouge for the abbreviated business sessions--December 3 and 4, 1943, and December 7 and 8, 1944.^{111 112} Election of officers was the main problem to be solved in those years of cancelled conventions. It was pointed out at a meeting of the Executive Council in November before the 1942 convention that the Constitution of the Association did not provide for election of officers except at an annual meeting of the full Association.¹¹³ The Association, however, at the 1942 convention in Shreveport, voted to suspend the election provisions of the Constitution temporarily and to authorize the Executive Council to work out a method of electing

¹¹¹"House of Delegates Meeting," Louisiana Schools, XXI (October, 1943), 18.

¹¹²"Meeting of House of Delegates," Louisiana Schools, XXII (November, 1944), 18.

¹¹³Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 176.

officers of the Association.¹¹⁴ The Council drew up a plan for holding the election by means of absentee ballots printed in Louisiana Schools. The plan worked well and undoubtedly established a precedent which led to other developments later in the administration of Wright. At its meeting in 1944, the House of Delegates passed a resolution instructing officials of the Association to arrange for resumption of regular conventions beginning in 1945.¹¹⁵ Meeting at Baton Rouge in September, 1945, the Executive Council complied with this directive, setting the convention at Alexandria on November 28, 29, and 30.¹¹⁶

Constitutional Amendments

Proposals to amend the Constitution of the Association came with increasing frequency during the 1940's. In 1944, when cancellation of the convention made immediate adoption of amendments constitutionally impossible, the

¹¹⁴"Proceedings of General Business Meetings at Shreveport," Louisiana Schools, XX (January, 1943), 27.

¹¹⁵"Resolutions Adopted by the House of Delegates of the Louisiana Teachers' Association at the Annual Meeting, December 8, 1944, Baton Rouge, La.," op. cit., p. 12.

¹¹⁶Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 62.

Department of Classroom Teachers nevertheless submitted a series of amendment proposals for publication in Louisiana Schools.¹¹⁷ The October issue of Louisiana Schools in 1945 carried four suggested amendments advanced by individual members of the Association. These amendments dealt with matters as various as public relations, election of local-unit delegates to conventions of the Association, and election of delegates to conventions of the National Education Association.¹¹⁸ Two amendments--one setting up a new procedure for selecting delegates to conventions of the National Education Association, and another establishing altered methods for selection of local delegates to conventions of the State Association--were adopted at the 1945 convention in Alexandria.¹¹⁹

New Constitution

The convention of 1945 also ordered by resolution

¹¹⁷"Constitutional Amendments Proposed by Classroom Teacher Department of Louisiana Teachers Association," Louisiana Schools, XXII (September, 1944), 21.

¹¹⁸"Proposed Amendments to L. T. A. Constitution," Louisiana Schools, XXIII (October, 1945), 24-25.

¹¹⁹"Constitutional Amendments Adopted at 1945 LTA Convention," Louisiana Schools, XXIII (January, 1946), 18.

that the president of the Association appoint a special five-member committee "to study the present-day needs of a Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisiana Teachers' Association," and to rewrite the Constitution and By-Laws in time for these to be presented to the Association at its 1946 convention.¹²⁰ L. H. Boulet, chairman of the special committee, appeared before the Executive Council in August, 1946, and requested Council members to submit to the committee suggestions for changes.¹²¹ After many preliminary revisions, a proposed Constitution was published in the November issue of Louisiana Schools in 1946.¹²² Adoption of a new Constitution was deferred until the 1947 convention in order to give members of the Association time to study it. In February, the Department of Classroom Teachers, whose influence in the Association's affairs continued to grow, served notice that it would insist upon

¹²⁰"Resolutions Adopted at 1945 Convention," op. cit., p. 19.

¹²¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 75.

¹²²"Proposed Revision of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisiana Teachers Association," Louisiana Schools, XXIV (November, 1946), 34-37.

presentation of the Constitution section by section.¹²³ A new Constitution was finally approved by the Association at its convention at Alexandria in 1947, and was published in the April issue of Louisiana Schools in 1948.¹²⁴ Louisiana Schools summarized major constitutional changes in March, 1948. The name of the organization was changed to "Louisiana Education Association," and this designation was used for the remainder of Wright's administration. The membership fee was increased from two dollars to four dollars. Provision was made for associate memberships to be extended to members of units of Future Teachers of America at Louisiana colleges and universities. A special membership classification was provided for retired teachers.¹²⁵ Two other provisions in the new Constitution were later to have important results. The Executive Council was empowered to set up a system of absentee voting, and was directed to

¹²³"Classroom Teacher News," Louisiana Schools, XXIV (May, 1947), 23.

¹²⁴"Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisiana Education Association," Louisiana Schools, XXV (April, 1948), 15-19.

¹²⁵"The L. E. A. Constitution," Louisiana Schools, XXV (March, 1948), 13.

provide for expanded services. With reference to services, the Constitution said:

The Executive Council shall provide for expanded services in the executive offices of the Association in the fields of public relations and research. The Executive Council, upon recommendation of the executive secretary, shall be empowered to employ a Field Secretary and such other personnel as may be deemed necessary to carry out these objectives.¹²⁶

The Constitution became effective on September 1, 1948.¹²⁷

Field Secretary

In compliance with the mandate of the new Constitution, the Executive Council in April, 1948, directed Howard W. Wright to advise officials of local units of the Association and heads of colleges and universities that applications were being received from persons interested in becoming field secretary of the Association.¹²⁸ In August, 1948, the Council elected Gordon A. Webb, to the new position for a term beginning September 1, 1948, and

¹²⁶"Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisiana Education Association," op. cit., p. 16.

¹²⁷"The L. E. A. Constitution," loc. cit.

¹²⁸Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 106.

expiring November 30, 1950, thereafter to be elected for a three-year term of office to run concurrently with that of the executive secretary.¹²⁹ Webb resigned as field secretary in December, 1950, and N. B. Hackett was named to replace him.¹³⁰ When Hackett was elected executive secretary of the Association after the resignation of Howard W. Wright, Horace C. Robinson became the Association's third field secretary in September, 1952.¹³¹ A year after Webb's election as field secretary, the Executive Council named Mrs. Dallas Kent to act as his secretary with the title of "Associate Editor of Louisiana Schools and press representative of the [Association]"¹³² The field secretary became chairman of the Association's new Public Relations Committee and worked to increase the number and usefulness of local teachers' organizations affiliated with

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 111.

¹³⁰Ibid., pp. 175-76.

¹³¹Minutes of the Executive Council of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, Vol. IV, p. 216.

¹³²Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., pp. 146-47.

the Association.¹³³ He planned leadership conferences involving the Public Relations Committee, presidents of local units, and the Executive Council.¹³⁴ Webb recalled that his duties as the Association's first field secretary were numerous. He believed, however, that one of his most important achievements in the position was the arousal, among Louisiana teachers, of awareness of the Association's leading role in the continuing improvement of the economic and professional position of the teaching profession in Louisiana public schools.¹³⁵

Absentee Voting

Suggestions that a system of absentee balloting be instituted by the Association in order to give all active members a voice in selection of officers were made from time to time from the date of reorganization. In the late 1940's, when proposals for constitutional amendments came more frequently, and when reframing of the Constitution

¹³³"Report of the Field Secretary on the LEA Public Relations Program," op. cit., pp. 13 and 27.

¹³⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 144.

¹³⁵Interview with Gordon A. Webb, January 30, 1968.

began to receive serious consideration, absentee voting was mentioned often. The Department of Classroom Teachers, for example, in a statement of "proposed policies," went on record for inclusion of absentee balloting in the new Constitution.¹³⁶ A special meeting of the Executive Council was called in October, 1948, for the specific purpose of discussing the matter of absentee balloting. Complaints were heard that the Constitution adopted at the convention in 1947 was ambiguous in its provisions concerning absentee balloting.¹³⁷ The Council decided to conduct the election of 1948 in the usual manner and to have a committee, representing "the administrative, supervisory, and classroom teacher groups" of the Association, appointed to work out a plan for conducting subsequent elections.¹³⁸ At the convention of 1948 in Lafayette, the Association adopted a resolution that "a definite plan of absentee balloting" be drawn up. The matter was referred to a

¹³⁶"The Classroom Teachers' Page," Louisiana Schools, XXV (April, 1948), 6.

¹³⁷Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 114.

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 115.

committee.¹³⁹ In August, 1949, the special Committee on Elections submitted its recommendations for holding the election of 1949. Included among the recommendations, which were adopted by the Council, was a plan for absentee voting.¹⁴⁰ An official ballot for use by absentee voters was published in the November issue of Louisiana Schools in 1949, and absentee balloting went into effect with the election of that year.¹⁴¹

Code of Ethics

Two official codes of ethics were adopted by the Association during the thirteen-year tenure of Howard W. Wright as executive secretary. The Association's Committee on Professional Ethics met in Morgan City in April, 1939, and drew up a proposed new code of ethics, after studying reports "of previous committees on the subject and codes of other states."¹⁴² The proposed code of ethics was adopted

¹³⁹"Resolutions Adopted at LEA Convention," Louisiana Schools, XXVI (January, 1949), 21-22.

¹⁴⁰Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., pp. 139-40.

¹⁴¹"LEA Official Mail Ballot for 1949 Election of Officers," Louisiana Schools, XXVII (November, 1949), 6.

¹⁴²"Committee on Professional Ethics," Louisiana Schools, XVII (November, 1939), 37.

by the Association at its November convention at Alexandria in 1939,¹⁴³ and was published in the December issue of Louisiana Schools in 1940.¹⁴⁴ In 1950, the Committee on Professional Ethics recommended that a committee be appointed "to revise and rewrite" the code adopted in 1939, declaring that "professional relationship to the child" should be stressed in the rewritten code.¹⁴⁵ The committee's recommendation was adopted. The proposed revised code of ethics was published in the September issue of Louisiana Schools in 1951,¹⁴⁶ and was adopted by the House of Delegates at the 1951 convention in Shreveport.¹⁴⁷

Membership and Financial Worth

Although the House of Delegates in 1944 passed a resolution for resumption of war-suspended conventions for

¹⁴³"Committee on Professional Ethics," Louisiana Schools, XVIII (November, 1940), 37.

¹⁴⁴"Code of Ethics," Louisiana Schools, XVIII (December, 1940), 9 and 30.

¹⁴⁵"Professional Ethics Committee Report," Louisiana Schools, XXVIII (January, 1951), 8.

¹⁴⁶"Proposed LEA Code of Ethics," Louisiana Schools, XXIX (September, 1951), 12-15.

¹⁴⁷"Ethics Committee Report," Louisiana Schools, XXIX (January, 1952), 32.

fear that more prolonged cancellation of the annual full-fledged conclave would result in drastic reduction in the Association's membership,¹⁴⁸ such fear seemed not to trouble the State teachers' Association greatly during most of the administration of Howard W. Wright. In October, 1948, shortly after the new Constitution had gone into effect with its provision for an increase in dues, Wright reported a drop in membership to the Executive Council,¹⁴⁹ but the executive secretary's financial reports to the Council indicated that the Association did not suffer fiscal reverses as a result of a temporary loss of members. During Wright's administration, yearly budgetary totals of the Association hovered around the level of twenty-five thousand dollars during the early 1940's. The budget adopted by the Executive Council for the 1946-47 fiscal year went up to \$32,599.91,¹⁵⁰ and for the 1950-51 period anticipated revenues were listed as \$65,839.53,¹⁵¹ the

¹⁴⁸"Resolutions Adopted by the House of Delegates of the Louisiana Teachers' Association at the Annual Meeting, December 8, 1944, Baton Rouge, La.," op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁴⁹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 118.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 73.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 186.

highest amount in the history of the Association to that time.

Departments and Sections

The program of the 1951 convention, the last to be attended by Howard W. Wright as executive secretary, listed thirty-three departments, sections, associations, and other groups affiliated with the State Association of Louisiana teachers. These were: the Administrative Department; the Adult Education Section; the Agriculture Section; the Art Education Section; the Audio-Visual Education Section; the Business Education Association; the Classical Section; the Classroom Teachers Department; the Elementary Music Section; the Elementary Department; the High School English Section; the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Association; the Home Economics Association; the Industrial Arts Section; the Elementary Language Arts Section; the Mathematics Section; the Mental Hygiene Section; the Vocational Guidance Section; the Visiting Teachers Association; the Modern Foreign Language Section; the Music Educators Association; the Principals Association; the School Librarians Association; the Science Teachers Section; the High School Social Studies Section; the Elementary Social Studies Section; the

Special Education Section; the Speech Association; the Superintendents Association; the Supervisors Association; the Teachers of French Association; the Vocational Association; and the Louisiana Division of the National Council for the Social Studies.¹⁵²

Of these groups, the Department of Classroom Teachers experienced a particularly noticeable growth of influence during the period. The Constitution adopted in 1947 provided that the president of the classroom teachers' organization should be a member ex officio of the Executive Council. At its 1947 convention in Alexandria, the State Association passed a resolution declaring the Department of Classroom Teachers would "receive an additional appropriation proportionate to the amount of increase in . . . dues" if the membership dues of the Association should be increased.¹⁵³ This department of the Association was especially active in defense of existing teacher-welfare laws, and in moves to extend and liberalize them.

¹⁵²"Convention Programs," Louisiana Schools, XXIX (November, 1951), 15-30.

¹⁵³"Resolutions on School Legislation," loc. cit.

Relationships with Other Agencies

It has been pointed out that in the period during which Howard W. Wright served as executive secretary cooperative effort for the advancement of public-school education in Louisiana drew strong emphasis in the Association. The Association also continued to maintain close ties with the National Education Association, whose president in the first year of Wright's tenure was a Louisiana woman--Amy H. Hinrichs, of New Orleans. The Louisiana delegation to the convention of the National Education Association's convention in Buffalo, New York, in 1946, for example, held a special meeting during the convention to develop a plan for "increasing interest of Louisiana teachers in the NEA."¹⁵⁴ The Executive Council voted to make "diligent effort . . . to secure Louisiana educational, commercial, and agricultural products for appropriate displays in Louisiana headquarters" at the National Education Association's convention at Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1947.¹⁵⁵ At an August meeting in 1950 the Council gave

¹⁵⁴Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 75.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 91.

special recognition to Gordon A. Webb, field secretary, for work done in establishing a Louisiana room at the convention of the National Education Association in St. Louis.¹⁵⁶

In August, 1951, the Council ruled that each delegate from the Association of Louisiana teachers "shall share equal responsibility in serving in the Louisiana Room. . . ."¹⁵⁷

In 1946, the Council authorized Wright "to cooperate with any other agencies or governing bodies within the State in providing an appropriate form of entertainment" for the conference of executive secretaries of state teachers' associations of the United States which was to be held in New Orleans on November 18, 19, and 20.¹⁵⁸ In 1952, it named Van D. Odom official delegate of the State Association to the Conference of Elementary Principals in New Orleans, March 26, 27, 28, and 29.¹⁵⁹ This conference was one of a series of regional conferences sponsored by the

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 171.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 192.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 74.

¹⁵⁹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. IV, op. cit., p. 200.

Department of Elementary School Principals of the National Education Association.¹⁶⁰

Wright's Resignation

Howard W. Wright submitted his resignation to the Executive Council at a meeting held August 28, 1952.¹⁶¹

Accepting his resignation "with regret," the Council elected N. B. Hackett, field secretary and former president of the Association, to succeed him.¹⁶² In September, 1952, the Council adopted a motion offered by Ida M. Coburn. The motion said in part:

. . . I move that Howard W. Wright be, and is hereby named as a consultant to the . . . Association Executive Council and as an advisory member of the Legislative Committee and the Welfare Committee of the [Association].¹⁶³

V. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The organization of Louisiana public-school teachers established at Alexandria in 1892 had a sixty-year history

¹⁶⁰NEA, Proceedings, 1952, p. 271.

¹⁶¹Minutes of the Executive Council, Vol. IV, op. cit., p. 212.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 213.

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 216.

of accomplishment when Howard W. Wright stepped down from the post of executive secretary. Early accomplishments of the Association may seem insignificant now by comparison with later achievements, but they appeared as major victories to supporters of public-school education in the State of Louisiana as the twentieth century began. In the years before reorganization in 1922, the Association's main contribution to public education was supportive in nature.

The solid backing accorded by the Association during that period to the progressive programs of two dynamic State Superintendents of Public Education--J. B. Aswell and T. H. Harris--received wide newspaper publicity, bringing to the attention of the Louisiana public the critical problems of public-school education in the State.

Beginning with the administration of P. H. Griffith as first full-time executive secretary, following reorganization in 1922, the Association quickly became an influential agency in the State's legislative halls, battling vigorously for laws to benefit the public-school system. Passage of the Tobacco Tax Bill to augment State school funds, and establishment of a fund to provide a per-educable allotment for needy parishes were regarded as major

victories of the Association while Griffith was executive secretary.

G. O. Houston's administration was highlighted by great advances in the area of teacher welfare. During his term of office, Louisiana teachers won job tenure and became beneficiaries of one of the most liberal State teacher-retirement systems ever established in the United States.

The administration of Spencer Phillips was marked by staunch defense of gains made during Houston's administration. The Association, supporting the efforts of P. C. Rogers, first secretary-treasurer of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, maintained the Retirement System's actuarial soundness against repeated attacks. When numerous efforts were made to circumvent provisions of the tenure law, the Association offered support for court action to establish the constitutionality of the measure.

The outstanding achievements of the administration of Howard W. Wright resulted from a successful campaign, in the 1948 session of the Legislature, for legislative action which approximately doubled the amount of State tax revenue dedicated to the public schools, and which established a

State-wide minimum-salary schedule for Louisiana teachers. In one parish, the average salary for Negro teachers was more than tripled. In another, the average salary for white teachers was increased by nearly a third.¹⁶⁴ ¹⁶⁵ In most parishes, teachers received the benefit of sizeable salary gains.

Major accomplishments registered in the first sixty years of the State Association of Louisiana teachers are emphasized in conclusion. All five periods of the Association's history treated in this study witnessed exertion of the Association's influence in the realization of less spectacular gains for public-school education in Louisiana. The Association's development as a significant influence for educational advancement continued after 1952 in the administrations of two executive secretaries--N. B. Hackett and Horace C. Robinson. The activities of the State Association of Louisiana teachers under the leadership of these two men offer fruitful material for further study.

¹⁶⁴Annual Report for the Session 1947-48 (issued by Shelby M. Jackson, Louisiana State Superintendent of Education, 1949), pp. 190-92.

¹⁶⁵Annual Report for the Session 1948-49 (issued by Shelby M. Jackson, Louisiana State Superintendent of Education, 1950), pp. 239-41.

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APPENDIX A

PRESIDENTS AND CONVENTIONS OF LOUISIANA
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

<u>President</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>
Organizational meeting	1892	Alexandria (December 23)
W. J. Calvit	1893	New Iberia (December 26, 27, 28)
J. V. Calhoun	1894	Monroe (December 27, 28, 29)
C. E. Byrd	1895	Baton Rouge (December 30 and 31, 1895; January 1, 1896)
R. L. Himes	1896	Lake Charles (December 28, 29, 30)
D. B. Showalter	1897	Scheduled at New Orleans, December 27, 28, and 29, but cancelled because of yellow fever
D. B. Showalter	1898	New Orleans (December 27, 28, 29)
Mattie H. Williams	1899	Shreveport (December 27, 28, 29)
J. E. Keeny	1900	Alexandria (December 27 and 28)
J. B. Aswell	1901	Franklin (December 26 and 27)
Lula Soape	1902	Baton Rouge (December 29, 30, 31)
J. N. Yeager (E. L. Stephens presided in Yeager's absence)	1903	Ruston (December 28, 29, 30)

<u>President</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>
T. H. Harris	1904	Lafayette (December 27, 28, 29)
Edwin F. Gayle	1905	Alexandria (April 6, 7, 8)
B. C. Caldwell	1906	Baton Rouge (April 19, 20, 21)
C. A. Ives	1907	Shreveport (April 4, 5, 6)
L. J. Alleman	1908	New Orleans (April 9, 10, 11)
Warren Easton	1909	Alexandria (April 1, 2, 3)
V. L. Roy	1910	Baton Rouge (April 14, 15, 16)
J. F. Welch	1911	Lake Charles (April 6, 7, 8)
John McNeese	1912	Alexandria (April 11, 12, 13)
M. S. Pittman	1913	New Orleans (April 17, 18, 19)
Nicholas Bauer	1914	Shreveport (April 16, 17, 18)
C. J. Brown	1915	Baton Rouge (April 22, 23, 24)
Margaret Schoenbrodt	1916	Lake Charles (April 13, 14, 15)
F. M. Hamilton	1917	Alexandria (April 12, 13, 14)
Mrs. L. C. McVoy	1918	Baton Rouge (April 4 and 5)

<u>President</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>
A. J. Caldwell	1919	Scheduled at New Orleans, April 10, 11, and 12, but cancelled because of school time lost in influenza epidemic
- - - - -	1920	Cancelled by Executive Council before selection of site and time
- - - - -	1921	Alexandria (April 7, 8, 9)
P. H. Griffith	1922	New Orleans (April 6, 7, 8)
W. S. Lafargue	1922	Baton Rouge (November 30; December 1 and 2)
B. F. Mitchell	1923	Alexandria (November 15, 16, 17)
J. S. Patton	1924	Shreveport (November 20, 21, 22)
G. O. Houston	1925	Baton Rouge (November 19, 20, 21)
E. S. Richardson	1926	Alexandria (November 18, 19, 20)
C. B. Turner	1927	New Orleans (December 1, 2, 3)
W. J. Avery	1928	Baton Rouge (November 22, 23, 24)
Amy H. Hinrichs	1929	Alexandria (November 21, 22, 23)
W. B. Prescott	1930	Alexandria (November 20, 21, 22)

<u>President</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>
Jack Hayes	1931	Baton Rouge (November 12, 13, 14)
J. H. Bres	1932	Monroe (November 17, 18, 19)
H. E. Townsend	1933	New Orleans (December 21, 22, 23)
Ruby V. Perry	1934	Baton Rouge (November 22, 23, 24)
L. P. Terrebonne	1935	Alexandria (November 21, 22, 23)
Spencer Phillips	1936	Monroe (November 19, 20, 21)
Lether E. Frazar	1937	Shreveport (November 18, 19, 20)
L. W. Ferguson	1938	Baton Rouge (November 17, 18, 19)
James N. Poche	1939	Alexandria (November 19, 20, 21, 22)
E. A. Lee	1940	Monroe (November 17, 18, 19, 20)
W. J. Dodd	1941	New Orleans (November 16, 17, 18, 19)
C. H. Downs	1942	Shreveport (November 22, 23, 24, 25)
E. R. Hester	1943	Baton Rouge (House of Delegates meeting in lieu of full convention, December 2 and 3)

<u>President</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>
D. A. Allain, Jr.	1944	Baton Rouge (House of Delegates meeting in lieu of full convention, December 7 and 8)
Sue S. Keelen	1945	Alexandria (November 28, 29, 30)
H. J. Bergeron	1946	Shreveport (November 25, 26, 27)
D. D. Shelby	1947	Alexandria (November 24, 25, 26)
Mack Avants	1948	Lafayette (November 22, 23, 24)
Pearl M. Prejean	1949	Alexandria (November 21, 22, 23)
N. B. Hackett	1950	Monroe (November 20, 21, 22)
Hazel Shively	1951	Shreveport (November 19, 20, 21)
Van D. Odom	1952	New Orleans (November 24, 25, 26)

APPENDIX B

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE LOUISIANA STATE
PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
(Published in Louisiana School Review, December 1903)

Preamble

To elevate the profession of teachers and to promote the interest of the public schools in Louisiana, we have organized an association and hereby adopt the following Constitution and By-Laws:

CONSTITUTION

Article I--Name

This organization shall be known as the Louisiana State Public School Teachers Association.

Article II--Membership

Section 1. The membership of this Association shall consist of active and honorary members.

Section 2. The active membership of this Association shall consist of Public School Teachers and Public School Superintendents. The term Public School Teachers is interpreted to mean all teachers employed in schools supported wholly or in part by public funds--be said funds State, Parish or City.

Section 3. Honorary Membership shall consist of State and Parish Officers and Private School Teachers and such other individuals as the Association may elect. They shall enjoy all the privileges of active members except the right to vote.

Article III--Dues

Section 1. All active members of this Association shall pay an annual fee of \$1.00, which shall entitle them

to all rights and privileges of the Association. It shall be the duty of the Secretary at the close of each annual session to furnish the Treasurer a list of all absent members to whom the Treasurer shall apply during the following year for their annual fee. Three successive absences accompanied by three successive failures to pay the annual fee shall be sufficient cause for discontinuance of membership. No member shall be entitled to vote nor to receive the published proceedings of the Association until the fees have been paid.

Article IV--Meetings

One stated meeting shall be held annually, beginning on such a day and at such a place as the Association or its Executive Committee may determine. Special meetings may be held at the option of the Association or upon the call of the Executive Committee.

Article V--Officers

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall be a President, two Vice Presidents (one lady and one gentleman), a Secretary, a Treasurer and a Ticket Agent.

Section 2. The President and Vice President shall perform the duties usually devolving upon such officers. The President shall be ex-officio chairman of the Executive Committee. He shall sign all orders on the Treasurer.

Section 3. The Secretary shall be elected for three years; he shall be ex-officio Secretary of the Executive Committee. He shall attend to all the correspondence of the Association and of the Executive Committee. He shall prepare and distribute all the bulletins and information which this Association shall wish to place before its members. He shall attend to the railroad arrangements for all meetings. He shall receive as compensation fifty dollars per annum.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall receive and keep all funds belonging to the Association; pay out the same only on orders signed by the President and Secretary and report

the condition of the finances at each annual meeting of the Association.

Section 5. The Ticket Agent shall secure railroad facilities for the Association and furnish information of the same to persons wishing to attend the meeting.

Article VI--Standing Committees

Section 1. The standing committees of this Association shall be an Executive Committee consisting of five members, an Enrollment Committee consisting of five members and a Legislative Committee consisting of five members with the addition of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction as an advisory member.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall manage the general business of the Association, and shall have sole charge of same between sessions, call special meetings of the Association, prepare program of the proceedings for the annual meeting, and have the State Superintendent as an advisory member. The President shall be ex-officio chairman of the Executive Committee.

The chairman shall endorse all orders on the Treasurer; but no order shall be approved for any bill which is not presented within thirty days after the close of the session.

Section 3. The Enrollment Committee shall enroll all applicants eligible for active membership, furnish badges to same, collect the annual dues and pay them to the Treasurer. The committee shall prepare lists of classified members of each year, classified by parishes, with their post office addresses, and give the same to the Ticket Agent and Secretary for the use of the Association and for publication.

Section 4. The Legislative Committee shall consider all measures referred to it by the Association together with such measures as in the opinion of the committee require legislative action, and report to the Association the results of its deliberations. It shall also endeavor to secure the enactment into laws of such measures as are

recommended by the Association for said purpose.

Article VII--Elections

The officers and standing committees of this Association shall be elected by ballot at each annual meeting and shall enter upon their duties at the close of the meeting at which they are elected. All the names of persons nominated shall be placed upon a printed slip under the proper headings, and members voting shall strike off all the names but one for President, all but one lady and one gentleman for Vice Presidents, all but one for each of the remaining offices, and all but five for each standing committee. Tickets containing more than the proper number of names for any office shall not be counted for said office.

The Election Committee shall keep the polls open till noon of the last day of the session, and shall make a list of all members voting, and no vote shall be received unless the member offering the same shall present his or her card of membership.

Article VIII--Amendments

This Constitution and the following By-Laws may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any regular meeting, provided the notice of such proposed alteration be given in writing on the first day of the meeting and the action on the same be taken on a subsequent day.

BY-LAWS

1. An Auditing Committee consisting of three persons shall be appointed by the President on the first day of each annual meeting. It shall be the duty of this committee to audit the Treasurer's accounts and report the condition of the treasury to the Association during the meeting.

2. An Election Committee consisting of five members shall be appointed by the President. It shall be the duty

of this committee to conduct the elections for which it is appointed, in due manner prescribed in Art. VII of this Constitution.

3. The Executive Committee shall have power to appoint local committees whose duty it shall be to make necessary arrangements for the meeting of the Association.

4. The President's inaugural address shall be delivered on the first day of the annual meeting.

5. Any person reading a paper or delivering an address which is afterwards the subject of discussion before the Association shall have the privilege of closing such discussion.

6. All papers and addresses read before the Association shall become the property of the Association, and shall be published in the proceedings of the Association; and no paper or address shall be read in the absence of the author without the consent of the Executive Committee.

7. No paper prepared for the day session of the Association shall exceed thirty minutes in length, and no speaker except the person opening the discussion which follows the reading of the said paper shall occupy more than five minutes unless by vote of the Association.

CONSTITUTION OF REORGANIZATION OF LOUISIANA TEACHERS'
ASSOCIATION, ADOPTED AT NEW ORLEANS CONVENTION,
APRIL 1922

Article I

The name of this organization shall be the Louisiana Teachers' Association.

Article II--Membership

Section 1. Any person who is actively engaged in the work of education in the State of Louisiana shall be eligible to full membership in this Association.

Section 2. This Association shall consist of a state organization and parish and college organizations auxiliary to the state organization.

Section 3. The state Association shall include such departments as shall be created by the House of Delegates.

Article III--Officers

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall be a president, two vice-presidents (the first of which shall be the retiring president), a secretary, a treasurer, and an Executive Council.

Section 2. All officers shall serve for one year except where otherwise stated. They shall take up their duties at the concluding session of the Annual Meeting.

Section 3. The Executive Council shall be composed of the president of the Association, who shall be Chairman, the first vice-president, the State Superintendent of Education, ex-officio, and four persons elected by the Association, two for one year and two for two years, the successors to be elected for terms of two years.

Section 4. The only salaried officers shall be the executive secretary and the treasurer.

Article IV--Election of Officers

Section 1. The officers of this Association, except the Executive Secretary, shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Association by majority vote of members present and voting.

Section 2. The Executive Council shall have power to fill all vacancies occurring after the annual meeting, but such appointments shall be only for unexpired terms of those officers elected by the Association.

Section 3. The Executive Secretary shall be elected by the Executive Council for a term of one year; but, after being re-elected twice, he may be chosen for additional terms of three years, provided that the salary of the executive secretary and the conditions of his employment shall be determined by the Executive Council, and provided further that the election of the first Executive Secretary shall take place only after the Executive Council herein provided for shall have been duly elected at the next convention of the Association.

Article V--Duties of Officers

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall perform such duties and make such reports as customarily pertain to their respective offices, and shall perform such other duties as may be required of them by resolution of the House of Delegates.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of the president with the advice and assistance of the Executive Council to prepare the program for the annual meeting in time for publication and distribution.

Section 3. The Executive Council shall meet at the time and place of the annual meeting of the Association, and at other times and places upon due notice of the chairman.

Section 4. The Executive Council subject to the provision of the Constitution, shall have general charge of the work of the Association during the interim of the annual meeting of the House of Delegates and of the general Association.

Section 5. The Executive Council shall prepare a budget of expenses which must be submitted to the House of Delegates for approval. Expenditures thus authorized and all contracts entered into shall be supervised by the Executive Council.

Section 6. The Executive Council shall have authority to make necessary arrangements for the establishment of an official organ of the Association.

Section 7. The treasurer shall receive and receipt for all moneys paid to the Association and shall pay out same only as provided in Sec. 5 of this Article and upon warranties of the Executive Secretary, countersigned by the president. He shall furnish a surety bond in such amount as may be fixed by the Executive Council to be paid out of the funds of the Association. He shall report to the Executive Council all receipts and expenditures within four weeks after the annual meeting, which report shall be published in the annual proceedings. The treasurer shall make such other financial reports as are called for by the House of Delegates or the Executive Council.

Article VI--House of Delegates

Section 1. The House of Delegates shall be the legislative body of this organization. It shall have power to transact all general business of the Association at the annual meeting, and make general regulations governing the work of the officers and committees of the Association. It shall meet annually, holding its sessions on the first day of the annual meeting at the time and place designated on the program, and at other times as desired.

Section 2. Each parish organization referred to in Article 2, Section 2, shall be entitled to one delegate for the first twenty-five members, and to one additional delegate for each additional twenty-five members or major

fraction thereof, provided that each parish shall have not fewer than two delegates. Not fewer than one-half of the delegates from any parish shall be classroom teachers.

Section 3. Parish delegates shall be elected at any meeting of the parish association prior to Nov. 1.

Section 4. Four-year colleges shall have the privilege of one representative in the House of Delegates provided such colleges have not fewer than twenty-five members of their faculties who are members of the Association.

Section 5. Delegates shall not be entitled to seats in the House of Delegates until credentials in the form of a certificate of election shall have been approved by the Committee on Credentials selected by the Executive Council. This certificate of election shall be signed by the chairman and the secretary of the parish association or by the president of the college.

An appeal from the Committee on Credentials may be taken to the House of Delegates, where the issue shall be decided upon majority vote of the uncontested delegates.

Section 6. The president of the Association shall preside at sessions of the House of Delegates. The secretary of the Association shall be the secretary of the House of Delegates. The first order of business shall be to determine what delegates are entitled to sit.

Section 7. The House of Delegates shall have power to create standing committees, as desired, to study and report on such matters as Professional Standards, Pensions, Professional Ethics, Compensation, Tenure, etc. Prior to the organization of the House of Delegates, the general Association shall have the powers mentioned in this section.

Section 8. In case of failure of any delegate to attend, the delegates present from the parish shall appoint his alternate from the parish.

Section 9. The Executive Council and committees created by the House of Delegates shall make annual reports.

to the House of Delegates.

Article VII--Annual Meetings

Section 1. Meetings of this Association shall be held annually in the month of November at such time and place as may be determined by a majority vote of the House of Delegates. However, in the event the Executive Council shall find it desirable to do so for the comfort and convenience of the members, it may change the time and place.

Article VIII--Parish Organizations

Section 1. The teachers of any parish who are active members of this Association may form a local organization to be an integral part of this Association, to be known by the name of- - -(parish)- - -Parish Teachers' Association. Such organization shall not be official until written notice is given the secretary of this Association giving time, place, names of officers elected, and the names of members, accompanying same with dues unless already paid.

Article IX--Dues

The annual dues of this Association shall be two dollars (\$2), receipt for which shall be issued by the secretary. The secretary shall turn over to the treasurer all moneys received by him, taking his receipt for same upon approved blanks. The membership shall expire on June 30, each year. The present membership shall expire June 30, 1922.

Article X--Amendments

This Constitution may be altered or amended at a stated meeting of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the members present provided first, that all proposed amendments shall be read by the secretary at the first general session of the Association and printed copies distributed among the members; and, second, that the adoption of such amendments shall take place only at the last general session of the annual convention.

BY-LAWS

Article I

At the opening session of the annual meeting the president shall appoint the following committees: Committee on Resolutions, Committee on Election, Committee on Auditing to report at the final session of the Association.

Article II--Papers and Addresses

A copy of each paper or address given by a member of its departments shall be furnished before the close of the meeting to the secretary of the Association or to the secretary of the department and he in turn to the secretary for publication in the proceedings.

Article III--Department and Section Meetings

Section 1. The Association shall through action of the House of Delegates create or discontinue such departments as desired. Until further action the following departments are recognized.

1. College and University Department.
2. High School Department.
3. Elementary School Department.
4. Rural School Department.
5. Music Department.

Section 2. Each department shall select its own officers, including a chairman and a secretary. The chairman shall see that the report of the department is in the hands of the secretary of the Association within three weeks after the annual meeting.

Section 3. Each department shall organize such sections as it desires, and such sections shall select their own officers.

Article IV--Official Bulletin

The Official Bulletin shall be sent to each member of the Association. The Bulletins shall serve as the medium of communication between the officers and the members.

Article V

The officers of the Association shall be nominated at the first session. Election shall be by ballot, polls being open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the second day of the annual meeting. No proxies shall be allowed.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE LOUISIANA
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

(Drafted and approved by Committee on Revision of Constitution, May 10, 1947. Read and approved by LTA Executive Council in regular meeting on August 21, 1947. Amended and approved by the LTA House of Delegates and General Assembly at 1947 annual convention.)

Article I--Name and Object

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Louisiana Education Association.

Section 2. Its object shall be to promote the cause of education; to advance the standards of the teaching profession; to secure those conditions essential to the highest efficiency of the teachers and the schools; to have and to hold funds and property, and to give and take title thereto; and to do all other proper things in the furtherance of these purposes.

Article II--Membership

Section 1. The membership of the Association shall be of three classes, namely: Active, Associate, and Retired.

(1) Active Membership. Any white person who has merited and received the Louisiana State Teachers' Certificate and who is professionally engaged in the work of education in an administrative, supervisory, or instructional capacity in this State is eligible to membership. Members of the faculties of colleges, universities, and special educational training institutions in Louisiana are also eligible to membership.

(2) Associate Membership. Any white student who is enrolled in any Louisiana teaching training institution and who is preparing for teaching may become an associate

member of the Louisiana Education Association as a member of the Future Teachers of America, a student teacher organization, upon payment of an annual fee of one dollar (\$1.00). Associate members shall enjoy all the privileges of the Association except those of voting, holding office, and committee assignments.

(3) Retired Membership. All white teachers who have retired under provisions of teacher retirement systems within the State may retain membership in this Association upon the payment of an annual membership fee of one dollar (\$1.00). Retired members shall enjoy all rights and privileges of the Association except those of voting, holding office, and committee assignments.

Article III--Officers

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall be the president, the junior past president (who shall be the retired president immediately preceding), the vice-president, the executive secretary, the treasurer, and the executive council members.

Section 2. All officers shall serve for one year, unless otherwise provided, and until their successors have been elected and installed. They shall take up their duties immediately after the concluding session of the annual meeting.

Section 3. The Executive Council shall be composed of the president, who shall be chairman, the vice-president, the junior past president, the president of the LEA Classroom Teachers Department, the State superintendent of public education, ex-officio, and one person from each congressional district, elected by the members from that congressional district at the annual meeting, for overlapping terms of two years each. Executive Council members from the even-numbered congressional districts shall be elected in the even-numbered years, and members from the odd-numbered congressional districts shall be elected in the odd-numbered years.

Section 4. The only salaried officers shall be the executive secretary and the treasurer. Such other

personnel whose employment is authorized by this Constitution shall be compensated at a rate to be determined by the Executive Council.

Article IV--Selection of Officers

Section 1. The officers of this Association, except the executive secretary and the treasurer, shall be elected at the annual meeting, and a plurality of those present and those voting by absentee ballot as determined by the Executive Council shall decide. If the two ranking candidates for any office receive the same number of votes, decision shall be made between the two by a majority vote of the membership of the House of Delegates present and voting by secret ballot on the next day following the day on which the election was held.

Section 2. The Executive Council shall select the executive secretary and the treasurer for terms not to exceed three years, fix their salaries, require such bonds as may be deemed desirable, and terminate their services if the Council so decide.

Section 3. The Executive Council shall have power to fill all vacancies within its membership occurring after the annual meeting of the Association, but such appointments shall remain in effect only until the next annual meeting. In the event of a vacancy in the office of president, the vice-president shall become president for the unexpired term, and the junior past president shall become vice-president.

Article V--Duties of Officers

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall perform such duties and make such reports as customarily pertain to their respective offices, and shall perform such other duties as may be required of them by resolution of the House of Delegates, or under the direction of the Executive Council, when not in conflict with proceedings of the House of Delegates.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of the executive secretary, with the advice and assistance of the president

and the Executive Council, to prepare the program for the annual meeting in time for publication and distribution before the opening date of the convention.

Section 3. The Executive Council shall meet at the time and place of the annual meeting of the Association, and at other times and places upon due notice of the chairman, the LEA president. A minimum of three meetings shall be held during each Association year.

Section 4. The Executive Council, subject to the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws and under direction of the House of Delegates, shall have general charge of the work of the Association during the interim between annual meetings of the House of Delegates.

Section 5. The Executive Council shall prepare a budget of revenues and expenses for each fiscal year which begins on September 1 and ends on August 31 of the following calendar year. This budget shall be submitted to the House of Delegates for approval and for publication. Expenditures authorized under the terms of the budget and all contracts entered into shall be supervised by the Executive Council.

Section 6. The Executive Council shall have authority to make necessary arrangements for the publication of the official journal of the Association.

Section 7. The treasurer shall receive and issue receipts for all money paid to the Association, and shall pay out same only as provided in Sections 4 and 5 of this Article and upon warrants of the treasurer, countersigned by the executive secretary. He shall furnish a surety bond in such amount as may be fixed by the Executive Council, the premium of which shall be paid out of the funds of the Association. He shall report annually to the Executive Council all receipts and expenditures within four weeks after the expiration of each fiscal year, which report shall be published in the official publication. The treasurer shall make such other financial reports as are called for by the House of Delegates or the Executive Council.

Section 8. The Executive Council shall provide for expanded services in the executive offices of the Association in the fields of public relations and research. The Executive Council, upon recommendation of the executive secretary, shall be empowered to employ a Field Secretary and such other personnel as may be deemed necessary to carry out these objectives. All employees, except where otherwise provided, within the executive offices of the Association shall serve under the direction and supervision of the executive secretary with the approval of the Executive Council. The duties of this personnel shall be:

- (a) To organize and carry on research work which contribute to the professional and economic advancement of the members of the Association;
- (b) To see that the public gets definite, factual information about the educational system of Louisiana, and that all teachers get the same or similar information;
- (c) To assist actively and energetically in directing the legislative activities of the Association; and
- (d) To perform such other duties as will improve the educational system, the profession, and the welfare of the individual teacher.

Article VI--House of Delegates

Section 1. The House of Delegates shall be the legislative body of this organization. It shall have power to transact all general business of the Association at the annual meeting, and make general regulations governing the work of the officers and committees subject to approval of the Association. It shall meet annually, holding its sessions on the first day of the annual meeting, at the time and place designated on the program, and at other times as desired.

Section 2. Each parish school system, each city school system, each college, each special educational

training institution, and the State Department of Education shall be entitled to two delegates for the first seventy-five (75) members, and one additional delegate for each additional seventy-five (75) members, or major fraction thereof, provided each parish school system, each city school system, each college, each special educational training institution, and the State Department of Education shall have not fewer than two delegates. Not fewer than one-half of the elected delegates from any parish school system, any city school system, any college, or any special educational training institution shall be classroom teachers.

Section 3. Delegates shall be elected at any time prior to the annual meeting by the LEA membership of each parish, city system, college, special educational training institution, and the State Department of Education. Delegates shall be elected for over-lapping terms of two years. Each school unit shall elect annually as many alternates as the total number of delegates. Alternates shall be numbered serially in the order of their substitution for delegates. In the event of a delegate's inability to attend a meeting of the House of Delegates, an alternate shall serve in his place.

Section 4. Delegates shall not be entitled to seats in the House of Delegates until credentials in the form of a certificate of election shall have been approved by the Committee on Credentials selected by the Executive Council. This certificate of election shall be signed by the chairman and the secretary of the electing group. An appeal from the Committee on Credentials may be taken to the House of Delegates, where the issue shall be decided upon by majority vote of the uncontested delegates. The Committee on Credentials shall report to the House of Delegates the total number of qualified delegates present, indicating the number of delegates in each employment classification.

Section 5. The president of the Association shall preside at sessions of the House of Delegates. The executive secretary of the Association shall be the secretary of the House of Delegates.

Section 6. The House of Delegates shall have power to create standing committees, as desired, to study and report on such matters as Professional Standards, Retirement Allowance, Professional Ethics, Compensation, Tenure, Research, and other matters pertaining to the general interests of the Association.

Section 7. The Louisiana Education Association shall pay mileage to each delegate at the rate of six cents per mile, each way, by the most practical improved highway, from the parish court house of the parish in which the delegate is employed to the city in which the annual meeting of the Louisiana Education Association is held, provided that the delegate shall be actually present at the annual meeting of the House of Delegates and at the general meeting on the last day of the convention to receive said pay allowed.

Section 8. All proceedings of the Executive Council shall be published in the official journal. Committees created by the House of Delegates shall submit annual reports to the House of Delegates.

Article VII--Annual Meetings

Section 1. Meetings of this Association shall be held annually in the month of November, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Thanksgiving week, at such place as may be determined by a majority vote of the Executive Council. In the event of an extreme emergency, the time of holding the annual convention may be changed by the Executive Council.

Article VIII--Parish Organizations

Section 1. The teachers of any parish or city system, college or special educational training institution who are active members of this Association may form a local organization to be an integral part of this Association, to be known by the name of the (Name of Parish, City, College, Training Institution) Educational Association. Such an organization shall not be official until written notice is given the executive secretary of this Association, giving time and place of meeting and names of officers elected.

Article IX--Dues

The annual dues of this Association shall be four dollars (\$4.00), receipt for which shall be issued by the executive secretary. The executive secretary shall turn over to the treasurer all moneys received by him, taking his receipt for same upon approved blanks. The membership shall expire on August 31, each year.

Article X--Amendments

This Constitution and its By-Laws may be altered or amended at the annual meeting of the Louisiana Education Association in the following manner:

First, all proposed amendments bearing the author's name, or authors' names, shall be published in the official journal within sixty (60) days prior to their introduction;

Second, they shall be read by the secretary or someone appointed by him at the meeting of the House of Delegates and shall receive a majority vote favoring adoption; and

Third, they shall receive a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present and voting at the last general session of the annual convention of the Louisiana Education Association for final adoption.

Fourth, changes in an amendment may be made by the House of Delegates, subject to approval by the general assembly.

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BY-LAWS

Article I--Reports of Special Committees

Before the opening session of the annual meeting, the president shall appoint the following committees: Committee on Resolutions, Committee on Election, and Committee on Auditing, to report at the final session of the Association.

Article II--Papers and Addresses

A copy of each paper or written address given before any section, department, or general meeting of the Association shall be furnished before the close of the meeting to the executive secretary of the Association. It shall be the duty of the departmental or section secretaries to see that such copies are handed to the executive secretary.

Article III--Department and Section Meetings

Section 1. The Association shall, through action of the House of Delegates, create or discontinue such departments as desired.

Section 2. Each department shall select its own officers, including a chairman and a secretary. The chairman shall see that the report of the department is in the hands of the executive secretary of the Association within three weeks after the annual meeting.

Section 3. Each department shall organize such sections as it desires; and such sections shall select their own officers.

Article IV--Official Publication

The official publication shall be sent to each member of the Association. The publication shall serve as the medium of communication between the officers and the members. The official publication shall endeavor to present to the teachers of the State professional articles and news of educational interest; shall promote and encourage creative ability among its members; and shall in all respects disseminate interesting and valuable information concerning education.

(Note: The Constitution Revision Committee took no action on Article V of the By-Laws. The following was unanimously approved by the LTA Executive Council as part of the proposed Constitution.)

Article V--Elections

Section 1. Each officer and each NEA delegate to be elected by the membership of this Association, or by the membership from the respective congressional districts, shall file with the executive secretary on or before October 15, immediately preceding the annual convention, an announcement of his candidacy for the particular office to which he aspires, which announcement shall be accompanied by a recent photograph of himself. This announcement shall include a statement of his qualifications and such other information as he deems proper and of interest to LEA membership. This announcement shall be accompanied by a letter of formal nomination. The announcement, letter, and photograph shall be published in either the October or November issue of Louisiana Schools. The elective officers and NEA delegates shall be nominated at the first general session of the convention. None other than those whose announcements have been made as provided herein shall be nominated. The election shall be by ballot, polls being open from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 o'clock P.M. on the second day of the annual meeting. No person shall be permitted to vote by proxy. The executive secretary is authorized and directed to have prepared all election paraphernalia, such as ballot boxes, ballots, information as to qualified voters, etc. The Election Committee, as appointed by the Executive Council, and the election commissioners, as selected by the candidates for elective offices, shall be charged with the responsibility of supervising and conducting the election. A voting place shall be provided which will meet the convenience of those desiring to vote, and arrangements shall be made for secret balloting. The Election Committee shall prepare a report of the election results and submit same to the third general assembly, a copy of which report shall be published in the official journal of this Association. Immediately following the report of the Election Committee, the newly elected officers shall be installed.

Article VI

Roberts' Rules of Order shall govern on any point not otherwise covered in the Constitution and the By-Laws of the Association.

Article VII--Delegates to the National Association

The Louisiana Education Association is affiliated with the National Education Association. Delegates to the annual convention of the National Education Association shall be named in the following manner:

The president of the Louisiana Education Association, the vice-president of the Louisiana Education Association, the executive secretary of the Louisiana Education Association, the president of the Classroom Teachers Department of the Louisiana Education Association, and four (4) members of the Association to be elected by the membership, shall be official delegates each year to the annual convention of the National Education Association.

The four delegates to be elected from the Association membership shall be elected at the same time and in the same manner as the election of officers of the LEA, at each annual meeting of the Association. Not more than one delegate shall be elected from any one parish. The membership of the odd-numbered congressional districts (one, three, five, seven) shall elect one delegate to the National convention during the even-numbered years, and the membership of the even-numbered congressional districts (two, four, six, eight) shall each elect one delegate to the National convention during the odd-numbered years.

The Executive Council is authorized to appoint from the membership of this Association such additional delegates as are necessary to equal the total number of which this Association is entitled. All NEA delegates shall be members of the National Education Association.

APPENDIX C

A CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS ADOPTED IN 1923

BY THE LOUISIANA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Concerning Pupils

The true teacher will strive to place whatever educational facilities the state can afford within easy reach of even the humblest of citizens.

Investigation, involving the character or honesty of a pupil, should be conducted privately, and with utmost care and justice.

Teachers should never indulge in remarks with pupils or before classes concerning the peculiarities or shortcomings of other pupils.

They should always be mindful of the varied dispositions, characteristics, powers, and environmental conditions of children as determining the methods of treatment. In no case should a child be thought of as deserving less consideration than an adult, where his rights and privileges are involved.

Concerning Parents

Teachers should have due regard for the feelings of parents and always maintain a tactful and sympathetic attitude toward them. They should be guarded in their utterances about them and their financial or other limitations.

A teacher should ever be mindful of the fact that he is a co-worker with the parent in the training of the child, and that his success or failure will mean, in a large measure, the success or failure of the child.

Concerning the Teacher

No teacher is ever justified in shifting responsibility to another that should be borne by himself. In all

matters of right, it is the duty of superintendents, principals, and teachers to support one another for the best interest of the children in the schools.

Self-respecting teachers will, in their several relations to each other, endeavor to exemplify the "Golden Rule."⁷

The motive for all criticism should be helpfulness and improvement. Adverse comments and insinuations in regard to the work of a co-worker or of a predecessor are to be condemned.

It is unethical and unprofessional for teachers to harbor spite and jealousy towards one another. There should never be any indication before pupils or other teachers of any ill-feeling between teachers.

All the courtesies common among members of the older professions, and more, should be observed by members of the teaching profession.

Concerning the Profession

That only is professional which, in the long run, is advantageous to the rising generation.

Teachers owe it to their employers and supervisors to attend punctually, regularly, and faithfully to all duties assigned them, and at all times to show good cause for failure to do so.

Co-operation, loyalty, and sincerity should characterize all relations between supervisory officers and teachers.

Those in authority are, in turn, duty bound to withhold from the public information and opinions as to the personal qualities or the personal attainments of teachers, so long as they are under contract.

A teacher should transact all business through the proper channels and carefully avoid any appearance of an attempt to go over the head of his immediate official

superior.

The duty of refraining from undue political ambitions and activities is especially enjoined upon all teachers. This item, however, shall never be construed as discouraging the exercise of the franchise; and the eminent propriety of teachers holding public office of an educational character is hereby recognized.

All appointments, promotions, or advancements in salary should be obtained exclusively on merit.

LTA CODE OF ETHICS

Adopted at 1951 Annual Convention - Shreveport

The Value of a Code

The ideals of men best project themselves into reality when crystallized in written documents. The mere expression clarifies the sentiment.

--Franklin D. Jones

RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PUPILS

The primary consideration of the teacher in Louisiana is the present and future welfare of his pupils. He prepares pupils to be socially, morally, and economically competent in the home, school, and community and to be happy as a member of society.

To meet his responsibilities to the pupil, the teacher:

Deals justly, kindly, and intelligently with every child.

Inspires pupils in setting up worthy ideals for themselves and in acquiring the desire for knowledge.

Cultivates in pupils virtues of patience, courage, justice, sincerity.

Encourages the attainment of high standards in the development of physical, intellectual, aesthetic, moral, social, spiritual, and creative potentialities.

Trains every child to have respect for property, law, and order and develops habits of obedience to properly constituted authority.

Creates in pupils the desire to assume democratic responsibilities in respect to the making and enforcing of laws.

Prepares pupils for wholesome personal enjoyment, vocational fitness, worthy service, and wholesome family relationships.

Withholds any confidential information concerning pupils except from authorized persons or agencies that are attempting to aid the child.

Requests a substitute only when his absence because of illness, civic or school responsibility, or professional improvement will benefit, directly or indirectly, the welfare of his pupils.

Provides special assistance and encouragement for the pupil needing extra help as a phase of the regular school program.

RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE PARENT

The teacher recognizes the concern of the parent for the child's development and is ready to share this responsibility and to co-operate with the home for the best interests of each child.

To this end, the teacher:

Seeks actively to establish friendly and intelligent cooperation between home and school, keeping in mind the authority and interests of the parent as well as the welfare of the pupil.

Makes friendly calls on parents and extends sincere, cordial invitations to visit the school and encourages such visits to seek information concerning progress and welfare of pupils.

Meets criticism with open-mindedness and courtesy and offers valid and reliable evidence to

support his point of view.

Supports organizations that promote better understanding between home and school.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE COMMUNITY

The teacher recognizes his responsibilities to the community and strives to meet these by accepted standards.

To accomplish this, the teacher:

Inculcates in his pupils an appreciation of the principles of democracy, recognizes the common concern for educating world-minded American citizens, and aids in their development toward full participation in world affairs.

Demonstrates in his own living that education makes people better citizens and better neighbors; serves as a trustee of the social heritage, and, therefore, conducts himself so that he increases respect for his profession and for public education; realizes his responsibility for leadership; and counsels and confers with all who have an interest in education.

Exemplifies standards which he is endeavoring to teach; performs community service freely but not at the expense of professional efficiency; is actively loyal to the school system, the state, and the nation; exercises his duty to present or accept constructive criticism when warranted; and is not silent in public when he ought to speak, and is not disloyal to his convictions when he does speak.

Establishes friendly, sincere, and intelligent co-operation among the home, the community with its other institutions, and the school; participates in the social and civic life of the community always avoiding controversies which may tend to decrease his value as a teacher, but directs full and free

discussion of appropriate controversial issues with the expectation that comparisons, contrasts, and valid interpretations will lead to an understanding, appreciation, acceptance, and practice of principles of democracy.

Strives to make public education available to all, thereby eradicating illiteracy.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PROFESSION

The teacher, in relation to his profession, accepts a standard of professional ethics which is manifest in respect for authority, in building morale of the teaching staff, and in loyalty to individual responsibilities.

In keeping with this standard, the teacher:

Is cognizant of the importance of his profession and upholds that importance at all times.

Recognizes his responsibility to himself, in regard to his profession, to maintain good mental and physical health.

Supports and assists in raising the standards of the profession.

Helps to build a strong, continuing profession by encouraging young people of outstanding ability and aptitude to accept teaching as a career.

Regards teaching as a career, prepares himself adequately before entering his profession--a commendable life's work and not a temporary stepping stone, and improves his competency by study, by travel, by experimentation, or by other professional activities. The right of continuous tenure implies the responsibility for continuous professional growth.

Joins his local, state, and national

professional organizations and actively participates in each to promote professional growth, avoiding divisive competition which weakens the cause of education.

Shares unselfishly successful methods, plans, and devices for the advancement of the profession and the assistance of the inexperienced teacher, and gives full credit to associates for their achievements and any professional assistance received from them.

Seeks to secure and maintain compensation commensurate with the importance of his profession; such compensation should provide for a desirable standard of living, continued professional growth, and adequate retirement security.

Listens to the parent's viewpoint and weighs it carefully as an aid to better understanding of the pupil.

Does or says nothing that would undermine the confidence and respect of his pupils for their parents.

Informs the pupils and parents regarding the importance, purposes, accomplishments, and needs of the school.

Observes the professional courtesy of transacting official business with the properly designated authority.

Uses only legitimate means in seeking a position and carefully avoids any use of pressure, or other undignified or unprofessional methods.

Applies for a specific position only after verification of an existing vacancy.

Refrains, when under contract, from considering another position without first determining the

willingness of his employer to grant a release; however, no official should stand in the way of the worthy promotion of a teacher, nor should the consideration of another position be held to the detriment of the teacher.

Adheres faithfully to a contract and discharges all professional responsibilities until it is mutually dissolved.

Recognizes only those employment agencies that adhere to the ethics of the profession.

Holds in confidence information concerning associates, and avoids unfavorable criticism of associates or predecessors except when made to proper officials for the welfare of the schools.

Encourages co-operation, loyalty, and sincerity in all professional relations, and does not interfere with the work of associates and pupils.

Makes truthful testimonials, recommendations, and endorsements of associates, pupils, or materials.

Co-operates in the establishment of school policy, and, once policy is determined, loyally supports it.

A PROFESSIONAL ETHICS COMMISSION

The high honor of the profession should be the personal charge of each member; however, to interpret and enforce this code of ethics, there shall be a professional ethics commission.

By way of extension of its duties, and not by limitation, additional responsibilities shall be to:

- a. Answer all inquiries and promote understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of this code.
- b. Investigate, fairly and adequately, all

reported infractions of ethical standards of this code, after approval by the Executive Council of the LTA, when requested by petition of the teacher, another teacher, or local LTA unit in the parish or city.

c. Conduct hearings after due written notice with all evidence to be submitted under oath.

d. Make recommendations which may:

1. Exonerate.
2. Expel from LTA membership.
3. Request annulment of certificate by State Board of Education.
4. Request local board to place teacher under probation.
5. Request local board to reassign to the position or re-employ.
6. Make report public.

e. Study and make recommendations concerning amendments, and prepare outlines, for study and continuous appraisal by teachers in service and in teacher-education institutions, recognizing changing conditions, new items which should be included, and different emphasis which should be placed on provisions.

f. Publicize code through annual meetings, in local-unit meetings, and by annual reports to include desirable and undesirable practices and developments of improved professional relations.

g. Assist in establishing local-LTA-unit committees on professional ethics.

The membership of the Professional Ethics Commission shall consist of five members to be appointed by the president of the LTA for terms beginning January 15 of the calendar year following the adoption of this code. To establish staggered terms, the first members shall draw lots with one member to be allotted a term of one year, two

members to be allotted a term of two years, and two members to be allotted a term of three years. Their successors shall be appointed for three years. The members shall select from their membership a chairman and a vice-chairman.

The Executive Council shall adopt rules and regulations providing necessary expenses for the proper functioning of the Professional Ethics Commission.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The writer was born December 5, 1917, in Belzoni, Mississippi. He received most of his public-school education at Natchez, Mississippi, where he graduated from the Natchez High School in 1935. Later he attended Mississippi College, graduating with the B.A. degree in 1939.

He taught high-school English at Beaumont, Mississippi, from February to June in 1941. In the 1941-42 school term, he taught English in the high school at Newton, Mississippi. He received his commission as a navigator in the Army Air Force on July 3, 1943, and married Amanda Lee Haley of Meadville, Mississippi, the following day. He has four children.

He received the degree of Master of Education at Louisiana State University in August, 1963. He now is employed as an educational consultant with Special Education Services in the Department of Education at Louisiana State University.

EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

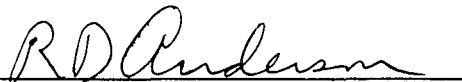
Candidate: Willoughby Aaron Sullivan, Jr.

Major Field: Education

Title of Thesis: The Development of the Louisiana Teachers' Association

Approved:


Major Professor and Chairman


Dean of the Graduate School

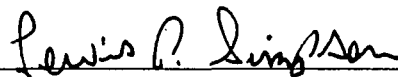
EXAMINING COMMITTEE:











Date of Examination:

June 18, 1968